

France, Iran to end financial dispute

PARIS (AP) — A senior Foreign Ministry diplomat will visit Tehran to sign an accord Sunday ending a \$1 billion financial dispute dating from the 1979 Islamic revolution, French officials said Friday. Vice-Foreign Minister Francois Scharer leaves Paris Saturday and will sign the agreement Sunday with Iranian Vice-Foreign Minister Mahmoud Vaezi, the officials disclosed. The English-language Tehran Times newspaper reported Thursday that French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas would make the trip, but the ministry denied it Friday. Instead, the foreign ministry said Mr. Dumas would visit Tehran at an unspecified time after the signing of the accord. The decision to send Scharer follows the arrest Monday in Switzerland of an Iranian suspected of involvement in the August killing of exiled former Iranian Prime Minister Shahpour Bakhtiari in Paris. The Swiss had not identified the man, who is believed to be Hossein Sheikhatari, a counselor to the Iranian Telecommunications Ministry. France issued a warrant for his arrest after the murder. Details of the agreement over the 12-year-old financial dispute have not been disclosed. But Iran's official Islamic Republic News Agency said France agreed to pay \$1 billion to Tehran.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية «الراي»

Egyptian writer jailed for blasphemy

CAIRO (AP) — A security court convicted a little-known novelist of blasphemy and sentenced him to eight years in prison. The first time this century an author was jailed for his writing. In another groundbreaking sentence, the court ordered similar terms Thursday for the publisher-distributor of Alaa Hamid's "The Distance in a Man's Mind" and the owner of the press where the book was printed. Published in May 1990, the book comprises dream sequences in which the main character meets prophets of the Koran, in comic situations. "This is a shocking sentence," lawyer Ali Al Shalakany, who was not involved in the case, said Friday. "It's based on a law that is existing but has never been used before. We've never heard of anything like that." Mr. Hamid was among several jailed authors from around the world whose plight was depicted in a newspaper advertisement in London this week by International PEN. That group of poets, essayists, novelists and other writers concerns itself with alleged legal abuse of their colleagues. But Mursi Saadeddin, Pen's Egyptian representative, explained the sentence as a function of Egyptian law. "Religion is taboo," he said. "According to our law, blasphemy against any religion is forbidden."

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Haig: Bush urged ban on Israel aid after Iraq raid

TEL AVIV (R) — U.S. President George Bush, serving as vice-president in 1981, sought to cut all U.S. aid to Israel after its jets attacked an Iraqi nuclear reactor, former Secretary of State Alexander Haig said. "Everyone in the cabinet including the vice-president at the time... demanded that we cut off all aid to Israel, economic and military," because of what participants at the meeting called an outrageous breach of international law, Mr. Haig said in an army radio interview broadcast on Friday. On June 7, 1981, U.S.-built Israeli planes attacked the reactor facility near Baghdad. Israel said at the time the reactor, then nearing completion, was designed to produce nuclear weapons that would threaten the Jewish state. Officials in Washington were furious the raid was launched without their knowledge. Mr. Haig described a post-raid cabinet session in which then-Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger led the call for a total aid ban. Mr. Reagan rejected the proposal.

Chief Saudi theologian decries defamation bids

RIYADH (AP) — The leading Muslim theologian of Saudi Arabia on Friday denounced those who defame religious leaders, saying the practice is against the teachings of God. "The trend of defamation of scholars of the faith, preachers and lecturers is widespread these days," Sheikh Abdel Aziz Ben Baz said in a statement distributed by official media. Sheikh Ben Baz, president of the Department of Islamic Research, Ruling, Call and Guidance, said criticism occurs in their private meetings, openly in lectures at mosques or via radio cassettes. "This is totally against the teachings of Allah and His Prophet," he said. Sheikh Ben Baz did not mention a certain case nor did he specify the nature of criticism, but it comes to the background of growing resentment of the excesses of the department for the preservation of virtue and prevention of vice.

Kurds hurl rocks at Turkish personnel

ROTTERDAM (AP) — Kurdish demonstrators Friday hurled rocks at personnel inside the Turkish consulate here but caused no injuries, police said. The rock-throwers were part of 40-member group protesting against Turkish government policies towards its Kurdish minority (see page 2), according to police spokesman Ton Hougee. Police apprehended four of the rock-throwers who claimed they were provoked by consulate employees standing in the windows and apparently mocking the demonstrators, Mr. Hougee said. The incident here follows a week of attacks against banks, businesses and military installations in Turkey thought to be the work of Kurdish separatist groups. At least 11 people died Wednesday when an Istanbul department store was firebombed.

Greek DC-3 crashes; 1 killed

ATHENS (AP) — A military DC-3 transport crashed Friday near a military base on the outskirts of Athens, and one person was killed and five injured, the Defense Ministry said. The plane crashed a few hundred metres after takeoff at 4:30 p.m. (1430 GMT) from the Tatoi military base just north of the capital. The aircraft was bound for the northern city of Salonica and was carrying six air force members.

Gorbachev may live and work in Spain

MADRID (R) — A Spanish radio station said on Friday that former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev might come to live and work in Spain. The private Cope station gave no details but said Mr. Gorbachev, who visited Spain last November, would probably come to Spain next summer to take part in a seminar on international politics organized each year by the Complutense University in Madrid.

Islamists sweep Algerian elections

ALGIERS (Agencies) — Muslim fundamentalists swept to a commanding lead in early results from Algeria's first multi-party general election Friday and promised an Islamic state within a year. Interior Minister Larbi Belkheir told a news conference that the fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) had taken 167 of the 206 seats in which one candidate won an absolute majority and no second round was needed. From 224 seats undeclared by late on Friday, the FIS needs a further 49 to take uncontested control of the 430-member parliament and become the first Islamic party to win power in the Arab World through democratic elections.

Results from 44 constituencies were still not available. At least 180 seats will be decided in the runoff on Jan. 16 between the two leading candidates in Thursday's poll.

FIS preacher Rabah Khebir told Friday prayers the FIS had gained 171 seats from 270 constituencies. "Allahu Akbar, echoed over the hills above Algiers from 10,000 worshippers when another preacher, Mohammad Houmeini, said those who had not voted FIS would go to hell.

"Backed by the support of the people, the FIS will bring about

the installation of an Islamic state this year," he added.

On official provision results, the FIS trounced the former ruler National Liberation Front (FLN), which won only 16 seats. The FLN, which ruled Algeria for the quarter of a century after independence from France in 1962, was in third place behind the Socialist Forces Front (FFS) with 20 seats.

The FIS is sending at least 171 candidates into the second round, competing against 158 from the FLN and 13 from the FFS, according to figures announced by Mr. Belkheir.

"This has given the FIS the psychological edge for the second round. It is going to be very hard for anyone to keep them out," said a Western diplomat following the poll closely.

"It looks as if the FIS is heading for an outright majority. Even deals will be difficult to stop them getting another 50 seats which is all they need," he said.

Another diplomat said FLN strategy was apparently to form alliances with supporters of other parties for the second round after the FIS "bogeysman" achieved some success in the first.

"It appears to have failed miserably and the only solution is that, by steps, Algeria becomes an Islamic state," he added. Forty-nine parties had sought

to attract the 13.3 million registered electors, of whom 58 per cent turned out to vote.

One commentator said, "It looks like small parties like the RCD (Rally for Culture and Democracy) have been destroyed."

The Western diplomat added, "We can expect presidential elections to now become the focus for the FIS."

Just before the election, FIS provisional leader Abdelkader Hachani, who is standing in for imprisoned FIS President Abassai Madani, said his party would seek presidential elections within a month of taking power.

President Chadli Benjedid, whose reforms three years ago ended the FLN monopoly, has a mandate until December 1993.

He said on the eve of voting, "I am not ready to abandon the Algerians... if necessary and if there is a threat to civil peace, I will fulfil my mandate until its legal end."

He ordered in the army last June when FIS militants demanding an instant Islamic state clashed with security forces.

The vote was postponed and is now being carefully watched in the Arab World — especially by Algeria's neighbours, who are worried by the prospect of a

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Remains of Buckley sent to U.S. embassy

BEIRUT (Agencies) — The remains of slain Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) station chief William Buckley were handed over to the U.S. embassy Friday, bringing the eight-year saga of American hostages in Lebanon to a close.

The remains — wrapped in cotton and bandages and shrouded in a brown blanket tied with plastic ropes — were found by police near the airport highway about 1 a.m. (2300 GMT Thursday) following an anonymous telephone tip.

They were carried to the morgue at American University Hospital (AUH) and identified as those of Mr. Buckley, who was kidnapped in March 1984 (see page 2).

The remains of Mr. Buckley were placed in a casket draped with a U.S. flag and carried away in a white U.S. embassy van at about 11 a.m. (0900 GMT).

The van headed towards the embassy in the Beirut suburb of Auhel, but officials there declined comment on the development.

Emerging from a two-hour autopsy, coroner-general Ahmad Harati said, "we have established that it's 100 per cent Buckley."

He later said what he examined as a "heap of disjointed bones."

"The only thing found with the body were two white buttons, probably left from the clothes he was buried in," he said.

He said identification was based on medical and dental records.

"Tooth fillings and the bridge matched those in Buckley's dental record, and the scar of a broken right pelvis also matched," Mr. Harati said.

The discovery of the remains came hours after U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar said in New York he hoped Mr. Buckley's remains would be returned by the weekend.

A caller claiming to speak for the Islamic Jihad, the group that kidnapped Mr. Buckley, told a Western news agency his group had released Mr. Buckley's body. "We have dumped Thursday night the body of American spy Buckley," said the man.

"We have thus fulfilled our pledge. The U.N. secretary-general has to bring about the release of our brethren in Israel," he said, referring to more than 200 Arab prisoners whose freedom had been demanded by kidnappers in Lebanon.

The caller then hung up. There was no way to check the authenticity of the call to international news agencies. Islamic Jihad had said in the past it would only issue written statements with supporting evidence.

Kidnappers, demanding that Israel free Lebanese detainees, have released nine Western hostages.

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Kuwait expels bedouns to Iraq

BAGHDAD (R) — Kuwait is deporting scores of stateless Arabs (bedouns) to neighbouring Iraq, according to humanitarian agencies.

Officials of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said late Thursday between 50 to 100 bedouns, including women and children, were being sent across the border at Safwan to Iraq every week.

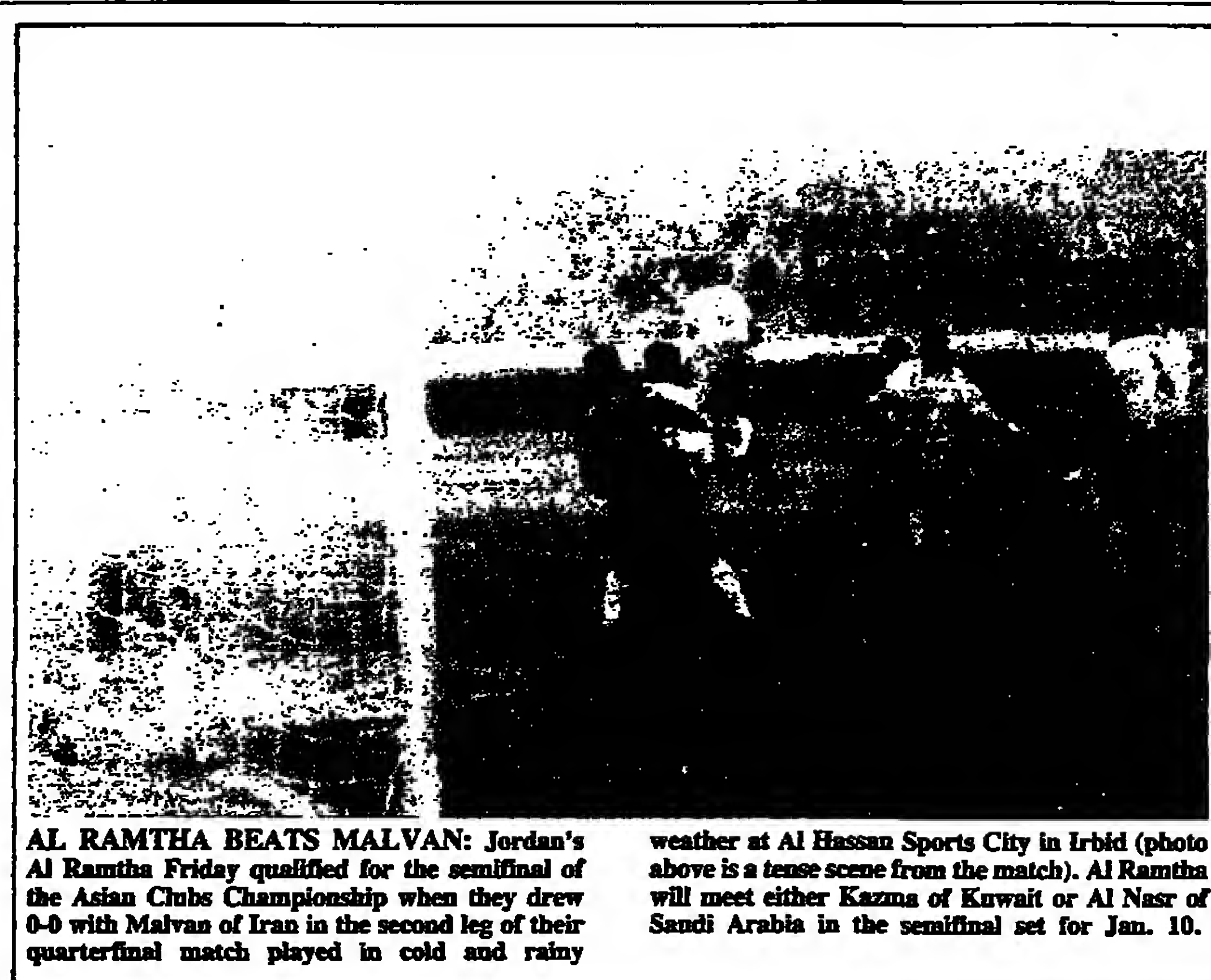
"They have the choice of either staying in jail or being expelled from the country," said a humanitarian official.

Humanitarian agencies say Kuwait is delaying the return of up to 4,000 bedouns who say they ended up on the Iraqi side of the border during the Gulf war.

The bedouns have asked the ICRC to help them return to Kuwait.

Iraq drafted many bedouns into its army after its invasion of Kuwait last year. Some were rounded up and jailed after the end of the war in February as suspected sympathisers with Iraq. So far Kuwait has accepted only a few hundred bedouns.

"The situation for these people is getting worse," an ICRC official said.



AL RAMTHA BEATS MALVAN: Jordan's Al Ramtha Friday qualified for the semifinal of the Asian Clubs Championship when they drew 0-0 with Malvan of Iran in the second leg of their quarterfinal match played in cold and rainy

weather at Al Hassan Sports City in Irbid (photo above is a tense scene from the match). Al Ramtha will meet either Kazma of Kuwait or Al Nasr of Saudi Arabia in the semifinal for Jan. 10.

Soldiers kill Palestinian; settlers run amok in W. Bank

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israeli soldiers in the occupied West Bank Friday fatally shot a Palestinian and wounded three others, the army said.

Four other Palestinians were also captured in the incident, which took place in the West Bank village of Ramin, the army said.

The victim was identified as Sami Ahmad Hatzain Nameri, 17. His death brought to 876 the number of Palestinians killed by Israeli soldiers or civilians during their four-year revolt against Israeli rule in the occupied territories.

Also Friday, Jewish settlers rampaged through three West Bank villages near the town of Hebron, shooting at seven Arab houses and five cars, in retaliation for stones being thrown at their car, the army and Arab reports said.

Hebron police were investigating 12 Arab complaints and had arrested one Jewish settler man and taken in for questioning a woman from the Jewish settlement Kiryat Arava near Hebron, the army said.

The settlers' actions came a day after the military commander of the West Bank warned Israel may return to its policy of expelling Palestinians for attacking Israelis.

Major General Dani Yatom said that "if attacks continue in (the West Bank) we will need to seriously consider an expulsion policy." He spoke in an interview with Israel's Arab television.

Israel has deported 67 Palestinians since the outbreak of the intifada, but has refrained from using the policy lately following international outcry, including from the United States government and Amnesty International, the human rights movement.

Meanwhile, an Arab resident was found dead two days after he

was kidnapped for possibly selling land to Jews, Arab reports said. He was identified as Hussein Masalha, 62 from Hejrah in the West Bank.

Israel has set aside land in the occupied West Bank for a settlement near the site where two Jews were shot dead in October, a settlers' leader said Friday.

Uri Ariel, head of a council representing about 112,000 settlers, confirmed a report that justice ministry official Pila Albeck had mapped out 50 acres for a new settlement called Rachelim midway Ramallah and Nablus.

"Yes, that's correct," Mr. Ariel said when asked about the report by Haaretz newspaper. "But it will be a number of months before the settlement is announced."

Government officials were unavailable for comment.

Police arrested two settlers on Friday for damaging cars and water heaters outside Arab homes in the Beit Kahl and Kfar Samoa villages near Hebron in the West Bank, the army said.

Settlers conducted a vigil at the site of the October roadside attack, insisting a few settlement mobile homes there without authorisation after the fatal shooting of a settler on Dec. 1 near Ramallah.

The defence ministry later struck a deal with the settlers in which they removed the mobile homes and were allowed to set up two large tents in their place.

On Friday, Israel's headline government gave the green light for armed Jewish settlers to form civil guards to patrol their own enclaves under police supervision.

Settler council spokesman Bob Lang said the move was a "band-aid" appeasement. Israeli leftists said it would only encourage the

settler tendency to vigilante raids. The United States has labeled settlement in the occupied Arab territories a major obstacle to the Middle East peace process it initiated in Madrid at the end of October.

Fall in migration

The man charged with bringing Jewish immigrants to Israel said Friday that the Shamir government was to blame for the sharp fall in the number of Soviet Jews coming to the country.

According to official data, only 140,000 Jews arrived in Israel in 1991 when 400,000 had been expected.

Simcha Dinitz, head of the quasi-governmental Jewish Agency, told reporters that tens of thousands of Soviet Jews were delaying their immigration to Israel due to high unemployment.

"I feel it is necessary to criticise the government... because I feel strongly that today this is the major hindrance between a mass Jewish immigration from the Soviet Union and the amount we get," said Mr. Dinitz, a member of the opposition Labour Party.

"Our estimates are that there are tens of thousands of Jews sitting on their suitcases right now with all papers ready... they are delaying their departure to Israel because of the difficulties in absorption generally, and particularly in terms of employment," he told a news conference.

Unemployment in Israel is above 10 per cent, a two-decade high, and still rising.

Israeli officials say Iraqi missile attacks during the Gulf war scared off many Soviet Jews. Immigration, which peaked at more than 35,000 a month before the war, plummeted below

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Arens: Israel is preparing to face 'nuclear, chemical threat'

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Defence Minister Moshe Arens said Friday that the Jewish state was preparing itself against the "threat" of chemical and nuclear weapons posed by Iran, Iraq and Libya.

"Parallel to the peace process, the state of Israel must prepare itself against the threat it perceives from countries like Iraq, Iran and Libya," Mr. Arens told visiting Italian Defence Minister Virginio Rognoni, according to a statement from his office.

"These countries declare their opposition to peace with Israel, and are arming themselves with long-range missiles with chemical warheads and are trying to achieve nuclear capability," he added.

"Israel is preparing itself against this threat and we are building a security capability that will be able to deal with the non-conventional threat to Israel in the future," Mr. Arens said.

The statement did not describe what measures are being taken. Israel has never confirmed foreign reports that it has a nuclear arsenal. Its standard line is that Israel "will not be the first to introduce nuclear weapons into the Middle East conflict."

In 1981 Israel bombed an Iraqi nuclear reactor, and Western monitors who visited Iraq after the Gulf war said Iraq had come close to reaching nuclear capability.

Major General Amnon Shahak, deputy chief of staff, said Thursday that although the Arabs do not yet have nuclear weapons, some are trying hard to get them.

Gen. Shahak said Israeli intelligence agencies will closely monitor nuclear weapons and nuclear scientists in the former Soviet Union.

"To the best of my knowledge, and to my great joy, there is no nuclear threat in the Middle East today," he told a news conference, but said the breakup of the Soviet Union might accelerate the threat.

Some 27,000 nuclear warheads are deployed in four former Soviet republics. Western concerns focus on possible disputes between nuclear-equipped republics or the export of nuclear knowledge by Soviet scientists.

"Nuclear weapons and unemployed nuclear scientists... we have to keep an eye on this with our intelligence," Gen. Shahak said. "This is the job of army intelligence and the other intelligence agencies."

In another development, the Israeli ambassador to the United States said Friday his government would never allow Palestinians to set up an independent state in the occupied territories.

"A state will not exist there (in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip)," Ambassador Zal-

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Washington bilaterals — the American waters that run

From George Hawatmeh and Ghadeer Taber in Washington

WHEN ARAB delegates arrived in Washington for their U.S.-scheduled bilateral talks with their Israeli counterparts, they knew they would face empty chairs across the negotiating table at the State Department. The surprise and disappointment, however, came only after the Arabs realised what the Americans had in store for them: A "hands-off" policy by the administration and a near total lack of interest on the part of the media.

After six days and 60 hours of negotiations with the Israelis, the Arab disappointment in the U.S. position remained evident as the administration kept a low

profile and refused to offer any interpretation of its own letters of invitation and assurances.

"If the Americans want us to talk with Israel directly... well, we have been doing just that," an Arab delegate lamented after the talks ended last week. "Without their (U.S.) intervention, however, they should know success would not be possible."

The wrangle between the parties over the date and venue and later over the division of the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation into two tracks for talks with Israel highlighted another crucial issue in the talks: The role of the U.S. as sponsor, host and "driving force" behind the talks.

Arab delegates were disappointed by the lack of vital and effective American involvement, especially

Washington's refusal to step in and work out a solution to the complex dispute over Palestinian representation.

The Arab delegations had argued that U.S. intervention was almost indispensable and certainly necessary to help bridge Israel from its intransigent position to allow for progress.

The Israelis consistently rejected any role by the Americans, contending that if the Arabs can rely on the United States to intervene everywhere, there is disagreement, they will have no incentive to negotiate in "good faith" with them.

One has to look at the way the Israelis conducted themselves during and even before the Washington talks in order to see what Arabs mean by saying U.S. intervention was needed for making progress in the negotiations.

Having absented themselves for five days from the Dec. 4 date for the sole reason of defying the Americans, the Israelis made every possible attempt to strip the bilateral negotiations of any meaning and prevent progress unless it was under their terms.

NEWS ANALYSIS

And as soon as the three Israeli delegations arrived in the U.S. for the negotiations, they began a concerted campaign rejecting separate Palestinian representation, which was explicitly recognised in the U.S. letters of assurances and invitations to the parties and at the Madrid conference of Oct. 30.

During the six days of so-called "corridor diplomacy" there were a number of proposals and counterproposals

made by the Jordanians, Palestinians and the Israelis to establish, in procedural terms, the Palestinian identity and representation.

The essence of the Arab proposals was to maximise independent Palestinian representation in the framework of the two-track approach while lowering the profile of the joint delegation. The Israeli team, however, tried to do exactly the opposite. Their proposals were aimed at obviating the Palestinian identity by rejecting parity for the Palestinian side in the negotiations.

The question now is why the U.S. decided not to offer its own interpretation of the terms of reference and whether it would do so in order to break an expected deadlock if the parties do not change their position on the issue in the third round.

Delegates and observers offer different theories as to why the U.S. administration, after spending months to get the parties to the negotiations, decided to play a low key, hands-off role at the talks.

From the Arab perspective, those hopeful for an American role in the future say that the U.S. took a back seat now so as to use its political capital when the situation merits. These analysts argue that, at this stage, the U.S. hands-off policy was aimed at forcing the parties to talk directly with one another. But they conceded that without American intervention, the process is not likely to succeed.

Other analysts contend that the lack of American involvement and the apparent loss of interest stemmed from the fact that the Middle

East was no longer a priority issue for the administration. They argue that the deteriorating state of the Soviet Union, which is threatening a further proliferation of nuclear weapons, overshadowed the Middle East, which is increasingly losing its sense of urgency. The worsening state of the American economy, forcing hundreds of thousands of Americans out of their jobs, may have also played a role in submerging the Arab-Israeli negotiations on the administration's agenda.

According to other observers, the administration was stung by the violent Israeli response to the Dec. 4 invitation, and decided to back off from playing a direct role in the second round.

By deciding on this course

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Germany rules out swap of hostages for prisoners

BOON (AP) — Germany Friday refused to swap two convicted Lebanese brothers for the two Germans who are the last Western hostages still held in Lebanon.

Government spokesman Norbert Schaefer said such an exchange was "out of the question."

The German government reiterated its oft-declared refusal to make a deal one day after a pro-Iranian group in Lebanon released a videotape showing the two German captives asking their government to make the deal required to win their freedom.

A statement from the Holy Warriors for Freedom said they will not release the two Germans unless two brothers imprisoned in Germany, Mohammad and Abbas Hamadi, are freed.

Mohammad Ali Hamadi, 26, was convicted by a Frankfurt court in May 1989 of killing a U.S. navy sailor after a TWA flight from Athens to Rome was hijacked to Beirut. The 1985 hijacking lasted 17 days. He is serving a life term.

His brother, Abbas, was arrested in Frankfurt in 1987 on a return flight from Beirut and charged with kidnapping two German hostages that year, hoping to exchange them for his brother. He is serving a 13-year jail term.

The tape was the first released by the captors showing Heinrich

Struebig and Thomas Kempfner, two German relief workers abducted in the South Lebanese port of Sidon on May 16, 1989.

Mr. Schaefer told reporters the Hamadi brothers had been "convicted of serious crimes and sentenced on the basis of law" and ruled out any exchange.

He said the videotape had been sent to Germany by the German embassy in Beirut and was being examined by "appropriate authorities." It was shown Friday on German television.

Friedrich Bohl, Chancellor Helmut Kohl's chief of staff, said Germany was a state based on law and would not allow itself to be blackmailed.

Speaking on national television, Mr. Bohl said the Hamadi brothers had been convicted by a court of law and "have to serve out their sentences." He said the two cases could not be compared.

"I repeat that an exchange is out of question," he said, adding that authorities also would not reduce the sentences of the Hamadi brothers.

Mr. Schaefer said the government was happy to receive the latest sign of life from the two hostages but regretted that the kidnappers are still refusing to release them unconditionally.

In the taped statement, Mr. Struebig and Mr. Kempfner appeal to the Bonn government to resolve their plight.

Holy Warriors for Freedom is believed to be controlled by

Abdul Hadi Hamadi, the elder brother of Mohammad Ali and Abbas and chief of the security apparatus of Hizbollah (Party of God).

The Iranian-backed fundamentalist Hizbollah is the umbrella for hostage-holders in Lebanon.

The group said the only solution to end the plight of Mr. Struebig, 50, and Mr. Kempfner, 30, is to release the Hamadi brothers.

The statement was fresh evidence that U.N. hostage negotiator Giandomenico Picco has run into trouble in his efforts to gain the release of the two Germans.

On Tuesday, the Hamadi family issued a statement counselling the captors to hold the two Germans until the Hamadi brothers are freed.

Mr. Picco, who played a key role in freeing the last eight American and British hostages in Lebanon since August, left the Middle East Wednesday after futile efforts through Iran and Syria to pressure the captors of the Germans to release them by Christmas.

U.N. sources, requesting anonymity, said earlier that the kidnapping of three Lebanese civilians by Israeli troops last week was a setback to U.N. efforts.

Mr. Picco has succeeded in obtaining the release of nine Western hostages.

Buckley — mystery man of hostage group

The Associated Press

WILLIAM BUCKLEY, a U.S. embassy staff member, was the mystery man among the American hostages in Lebanon.

He was kidnapped in March 1984 and is believed to have died in June 1985 after being tortured. Authorities on Friday identified a body dumped near a Beirut highway as his.

The puzzle over Mr. Buckley apparently was explained by his position — head of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) station in Beirut, according to published reports.

He was one of the first Americans abducted in the streets of Beirut. On March 16, 1984, gunmen stopped his car and seized him as he drove out of his apartment building driveway on his way to work.

Mr. Buckley, who was 55 when kidnapped, is listed as a native of Medford, Massachusetts. He was graduated from Boston University in 1955 with a degree in international relations, served as a captain in the army and held jobs as a librarian and building contractor. He went to work for the army in 1965 as a civilian employee.

He eventually joined the State Department, and his first overseas assignment was political officer at the U.S. embassy in Beirut in 1983.

On Jan. 22, 1985, nine months after his abduction, Mr. Buckley appeared in a 56-second videotape that somehow reached Visnews, a British television news agency.

"I am well, and my friends Benjamin Weir and Jeremy Levin are also well," he said. "We ask that our government take action for our release quickly."

Mr. Levin escaped his captors in February 1985, and Mr. Weir was released seven months later. Both men said they had no contact with Mr. Buckley.

In October 1985, the group Islamic Jihad released blurred photographs of what it said was Mr. Buckley's body. It said he was killed in retaliation for Israel's air raid that month on Palestine Liberation Organisation headquarters in Tunisia.

But no body was produced, and U.S. officials said the photos were not "conclusive proof." Mr. Buckley was dead, Lebanese Shiite and Western intelligence sources said at the time Mr. Buckley actually may have died earlier, possibly after being tortured.

On Jan. 20, 1987, President George Bush confirmed the death in an oblique reference in a speech at a Washington conference on terrorism, saying President Ronald Reagan felt concern "when an American in terrorist hands is tortured and, in the case of William Buckley, killed."

Freed hostage David Jacobsen said that for a time he was held, blindfolded, in the same room with Mr. Buckley and he believes Mr. Buckley died June 3, 1985. He was severely ill before his death, Mr. Jacobsen said.

Libya says West can send judges to Lockerbie trial

LONDON (R) — Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi has invited the West to send judges to Tripoli for the trial of two men allegedly implicated in the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am flight.

"They can come and participate in the hearing of the trial," Colonel Qadhafi said through an interpreter in a pre-recorded interview with British Independent Television News (ITN).

Libyan Foreign Minister Ibrahim Mohammad Bashari said in a newspaper interview published Friday that Libya was willing to send judges to Washington, London or Paris to discuss charges that it blew up the Pan Am jet.

"Judges of the Tripoli high court have sent messages to their colleagues in Scotland, France and the United States through diplomatic channels," Mr. Bashari told the London-based Al Sharq Al Awsat newspaper.

Col. Qadhafi, referring to the U.S. air attack on Libya ordered in 1986 by President Ronald Reagan and backed by British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, said he did not believe their successors — George Bush and John Major — would launch such a strike.

The Libyan leader, whose adopted daughter was killed in the attack, said: "They are different from both Reagan and Thatcher and I don't think they would commit such injustices."

Mrs. Thatcher allowed Amer-

ican bases in Britain to be used for the attack on Tripoli, which was in retaliation for alleged Libyan complicity in the bombing of a Berlin nightclub aimed at U.S. servicemen.

Col. Qadhafi apparently had no objection to Western observers and judges attending any trial of two Libyans which Scottish authorities and the United States have charged with planting a bomb which downed the jet over Lockerbie, killing 270 people.

"America, Britain and all, they can come and see the trial is going on. They can even bring independent judges to handle the case," the interpreter quoted Col. Qadhafi as saying.

ITN said Col. Qadhafi ruled out sending the two men for trial in the United States or Britain.

In a message clearly aimed at the British government, Col. Qadhafi said Libya no longer supported the Irish Republican Army (IRA) in its fight against British rule in Northern Ireland. "We disagree with the actions of the IRA," he said. "They are committing acts of terrorism which we reject."

Libya has been accused of sending arms and explosives, including 100 tonnes of the explosive semtex, to the IRA.

Col. Qadhafi said Libya wanted no part of a war between Irish Catholics and Protestants. "We do not want war between

the Protestants and the Catholics. This is a decision which is based on our own conviction," he said in the brief interview apparently recorded in his tent outside the Libyan capital.

In his interview with Al Sharq Al Awsat, Foreign Minister Bashari said Libyans called on Western judges to study the transcripts of Tripoli's investigations into the two Libyans charged with planting the Lockerbie bomb.

"The message sent to Western judges proposes meetings between the two sides to discuss the accusations against the two Libyans citizens, whether in Libya or one of the capitals of the three Western countries," the newspaper, printed daily in Cairo, quoted him as saying.

France has also accused Libya of involvement in the 1989 bombing of a French airliner over Niger, killing 170 people.

Mr. Bashari said the foreign ministers of the five-nation Arab Maghreb Union — Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and Mauritania — initiative aimed at solving the Lockerbie crisis.

Iran, challenging the U.S., has said its courts should be allowed to deal with a U.S. warship attack that killed 290 people on an Iran Air jet.

In a sermon at Tehran's mass Friday prayers, head of judiciary Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi referred to "attempts by the U.S.



Muammar Qadhafi government to pressure Libya, Tehran Radio said.

"If American courts have jurisdiction over this (Pan Am) case, then Iranian courts have jurisdiction over the attack by the U.S. cruiser Vincennes which martyred all 290 people aboard the Iranian passenger plane," the radio quoted Ayatollah Yazdi as saying.

In August 1988, the Vincennes shot down an Iran Air Airbus over the Hormuz Strait during a naval battle in the Gulf.

Tehran accused Washington of murder. The Pentagon said the ship had mistaken the airliner for a fighter plane.

Iran filed a suit at the International Court of Justice at the Hague in May 1989, seeking damages for the loss of the plane and its passengers and crew. Washington has contested the court's jurisdiction.

Iran dismissed a 1990 offer by Washington to pay about \$30 million in compensation to the victims' relatives.

Freij's car smashed

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Palestinian youths Thursday smashed the car of the Bethlehem mayor who defied a call for a strike by merchants on Christmas eve.

The incident in the West Bank city appeared to reflect the tensions between rival Palestinian factions, which have risen since moderates joined the U.S.-brokered Mideast peace process.

The attackers used clubs to shatter the windows and dent the hood and fenders of Mayor Elias Freij's brown Mercedes while the driver was inside a shop, the mayor's office said. Mr. Freij was not present.

Mr. Freij, an unwavering moderate throughout the 24 years of occupation, is a member of the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks.

No claim of responsibility was made for vandalising the car, but Mr. Freij said he believed it was targeted "because I called upon the merchants to open their shops on Christmas eve."

Mr. Freij called the attack "an act of cowardice and ignorance." "I really pity these people," he told the Associated Press. "It is an act of courage to damage the glass of a parked car, a municipality car?"

Leaflets strewn by activists ordered stores to close on Christmas eve, as they have done on every Christmas since the outbreak of the Palestinian uprising.

But stores at Manger Square, outside the church over Christ's reputed birthplace, stayed open and helped make this Christmas the most festive in the past four years.

Some merchants cited the mayor's plea as the reason for staying open, but others noted that leaders of the uprising had earlier urged that stores be open.

Manger Square is the city's main tourist area. Most shopkeepers elsewhere in Bethlehem obeyed the strike call.

Several prominent moderates have been assassinated in the occupied territories since 1967 in factional feuding, and others have had their cars vandalised.

Turkey declares war on Kurdish dissidents

ANKARA (AP) — Turkey has vowed to wipe out Kurdish violence without tramping civil rights, but the firebombing of a Istanbul store, blamed on separatists, raised concern that easing of restrictions against the minority might be derailed.

The attack on the clothing store, which set off a blaze killing 11 and injuring 17 people, followed by a few hours Wednesday's announcement that Kurdish guerrillas has slain 10 soldiers at an army post in southeastern Turkey.

Kurds, under the banner of the outlawed Kurdish Labour Party (PKK), have been launching guerrilla strikes since 1984 to try to win a separate, Marxist Kurdish state in the region, which borders Iran, Iraq and Syria. But until the attack on the store in Turkey's largest city, Kurd-linked violence had been largely in the distant southeast provinces.

The store is owned by a brother of the governor leading Turkey's campaign in the provinces against separatists.

Premier Suleyman Demirel led a cabinet meeting Thursday to discuss terrorism.

Government spokesman Alkin Gonen, apparently seeking to defuse concern that liberalisation of anti-Kurdish policy might be endangered by a strong reaction to the firebombing, later said that no martial law was contemplated for the southeast.

In March, a ban on the use of Kurdish language was lifted. Martial law was in effect in the southeast from 1978 to 1984, before a less restrictive state of emergency was substituted.

Mr. Demirel's centre-right coalition announced plans earlier this month to permit Kurdish films and music cassettes and an institute to study Kurdish culture. The first major Kurdish newspaper was expected to be launched this weekend.

The government will protect the "indivisible unity of Turkey with its state and nation" while respecting "human rights and principles governing a democratic

state of law," Mr. Gonen asserted.

"People of the (Kurdish) region not involved in incidents will be free of any repression, while those who take part in them will be accorded the treatment they deserve within the bounds of law. There will be no toleration," Mr. Gonen said.

The influential daily Milliyet attributed the rise in attacks to rebel concern that government's liberalisation policy would erode Kurdish support for the separatists campaign.

PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan said the attacks were part of an "identity struggle for the Kurds" and threatened more violence in big cities if the government continued to "come on us with guns and tanks." However, in an interview with the British Broadcasting Corporation. From his home in Damascus, he denied ordering the store attack.

Urging the Turkish government to stop its military campaign, he said if the guerrillas renounced its armed struggle first, it would mean "putting our neck under the blade like sheep (for slaughter)."

The rebels often attack from bases in northern Iraq and Turkish jets crossed the border three times this year to bomb their strongholds. But no doubt keeping in mind the complaints of Iraq Kurds about civilian casualties, Mr. Demirel discounted a similar strike.

Turkish officials have in the past voiced suspicions that the Turkish guerrillas have been aided and perhaps given weapons from Iraq, but the rebels deny this.

Iraqi Kurdish separatists are struggling separately for more autonomy from Iraq across the border in northern Iraq. They have said they do not support the Turkish Kurds' guerrilla attacks.

In tense debate in parliament over the firebombing, a deputy from Mr. Demirel's True Path Party accused Syria of supporting the rebels but presented no proof.

Boatload of immigrants reaches Israel

HAIFA (AP) — A ship brought 477 Jews from Odessa to Israel Friday in the first such operation since the wave of immigration began two years ago.

Four tug boats pulled the golden-hulled Greek vessel "Mediterranean Sky" into Haifa bay as immigrants on the deck applauded and waved to those on shore.

One immigrant on board sounded a shofar, the horn blown on important Jewish holidays.

To some Israelis, it was a scene reminiscent of their country's early days, when most immigrants arrived by ship. But others took a less romantic view.

Simcha Dimitz, head of the Jewish Agency responsible for

bringing immigrants to Israel, said he did not "want to spoil the euphoria" but found it "logistically stupid to be engaging in such operations."

But Rabbi Yitzhak Peretz, the cabinet minister in charge of immigration, said the sea route had advantages and was quoted by Israeli Radio as saying sea travel could become a new channel for transporting immigrants.

The voyage was financed by the Ebenezer Emergency Fund, a British-based Christian organisation, and organised by Ofek Aliya, a private Israeli-based group.

Most of the 470,000 immigrants who have flooded into Israel since mid-1989 have flown here

via transit stations in East Europe.

Of these, 142,000 arrived this year, less than the agency's predicted 200,000. Mr. Dimitz told a news conference. He said Israeli unemployment deterred many would-be immigrants from coming.

The agency said it was too early to predict how future Jewish immigration would be affected by the demise of the Soviet Union and its replacement by the new commonwealth of independent republics.

But Sofia Murdava, 45, from Tbilisi, Georgia, told reporters as she disembarked with her husband and two sons: "When we left there was something terrible

going on. We are happy that we are far away from this terrible place and this situation."

She was worried about finding work here but said: "We are here now and it must be all right."

Mr. Peretz, who went aboard to greet the immigrants, was kissed on the cheek by Irina Levina, a seamstress from Ukraine.

Mediterranean Sky left Odessa, Ukraine, on Monday carrying 477 Soviet Jews, 55 tourists, 22 Israeli government officials and 17 Christians, Ebenezer official Steven Lightle said.

Mr. Lightle, from Seattle, Washington, said the Ebenezer fund had chartered Mediterranean Sky for three sailings at the cost of \$500,000.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Qatari emir visits Egypt

CAIRO (R) — The emir of Qatar, Sheikh Khalifa Ben Hamad Al Thani, arrived in Cairo Friday for talks with President Hosni Mubarak on Middle East and Gulf issues and bilateral relations. In a live broadcast from Cairo airport, state-run television showed Mr. Mubarak embracing the emir, who arrived from Damascus where he held similar talks with President Hafez Al Assad. In a press statement issued on his arrival, Sheikh Khalifa praised Egypt for its role in arranging the current Middle East peace process and its anti-Iraq stand during the Gulf crisis. The emir is expected to brief Mr. Mubarak on the outcome of the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) summit he attended this week in Kuwait. The GCC leaders approved plans for a \$10 billion fund to aid development projects in allied Arab countries. Sheikh Khalifa will also inspect work at a neighbourhood named after his father at the new unfinished town of Obour, 25 kilometres northeast of Cairo. In January 1990, the emir donated \$20 million towards construction of new housing units in the neighbourhood.

Thai police officer surrenders on Saudi charges

BANGKOK (AP) — A senior police officer has surrendered to face charges of malfeasance and fraud while investigating the theft of millions of dollars of jewellery from a Saudi prince, police said Friday. Lieutenant-General Chalor Kerdiet, who surrendered Thursday, maintained his innocence and was released on bail, said an officer who spoke on condition of anonymity. Earlier, several lower-ranking officers were similarly charged in the same case. A Thai man who had worked for Prince Faisal stole the jewellery in 1989 and brought it back to Thailand. He is serving a five-year prison term. Gen. Chalor led the police investigation. But some of the recovered jewellery went missing, and some of the jewellery returned to the Saudis were fake. The Saudi government complained, and the episode strained Saudi-Thai relations.

Russia ready to foster ties with Syria

DAMASCUS (R) — Russia has expressed its readiness to promote bilateral ties with Syria after the Soviet Union ceased to exist, Russian diplomats said Friday. They said Russia's flag was hoisted at the former Soviet embassy in the Syrian capital at a ceremony Thursday. The embassy informed the Syrian government that the former Soviet consulate in the northern city of Aleppo had also become a Russian mission, a Soviet diplomat said. "The Russian government is ready to promote cooperation with the friendly country of Syria," he said. The Soviet Union, Syria's main arms supplier, signed a 20-year friendship and cooperation treaty with Syria in 1982. Russian President Boris Yeltsin, declaring he was taking over all Soviet embassies and missions abroad, has said he would be committed to all agreements and pledges made by Moscow.

Israeli orchestra rehearses Wagner

TEL AVIV (AP) — The Israel philharmonic orchestra rehearsed works by the German composer Richard Wagner in front of an invited audience Friday, provoking fresh protests from survivors of the Nazi Holocaust. "Why, in God's name, why?" Dov Shilansky, speaker of parliament and a Holocaust survivor, asked on Israeli Radio. Wagner, who died in 1883, was a notorious anti-Semite, and his works were much loved by Hitler. Therefore the philharmonic, Israel's premier orchestra, has not performed Wagner in 1938. Two weeks ago, Daniel Barenboim, the Israeli maestro who is now music director of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, announced he would lead the philharmonic in a concert of Wagner works Dec. 27. But the protests led the orchestra to postpone the event while polling the opinions of its 30,000 subscribers. The rehearsal was held on the day the actual concert was to have taken place. It was not advertised, and the audience consisted of people invited by philharmonic musicians and officials.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

18:30 Le Chevalier de Labyrinthe
18:30 Science Gauche
19:00 News in French
19:00 Fusion
20:00 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:00 "Can Funnies Home Video"
21:00 Encounter
21:30 Life on the Land
22:00 News in English
22:20 Feature film: "Red Knight, White Knight"

PRAYER TIMES

04:54 Fajr
06:16 (Sunrise) Dhuhr
11:26 Dhuhr
14:12 'Asr
16:26 Maghrib
17:28 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swedish, Tel. 810740
Assembly of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440

De la Salle Church Tel. 601757

Terranova Church Tel. 623666

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 623583, Tel. 628240

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775251

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Armenian International Church Tel. 683726

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 650923

Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

It will be cold, cloudy and rainy at times. Winds will be southwesterly moderate. In Aqaba, it will be partly cloudy and rainy at times, and winds will southerly fresh and sea calm.

Min./Max. temp.

Amman 3/8

Aqaba 10/17

DEPARTS

Jordan Valley 3/10

..... 9/15

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 10, Aqaba 20. Humidity readings: Amman 97 per cent, Aqaba 30 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Hanna Mansour 749364

Dr. Kayed Isayeh 753322

Dr. Mohammad Nabawi 693025

Dr. Tawfiq Qab'ib 623029

Fines pharmacy 661912

Al Asame pharmacy 670655

Natroukh pharmacy 626762

Al Salam pharmacy 636730

Yacoub pharmacy 644945

Steinwald pharmacy 676660

IBRD:

Dr. Mohammad Al Za'bi (—)

Al Sharaf pharmacy (275825)

ZARQA:

Dr. Jihad Misch (—)

Khalifa pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Department 661111

Labour minister denies report that government is expelling Egyptian workers

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordanian government will hold contacts this week with the Egyptian government on organising the employment of Egyptian workers in the Kingdom, according to Labour Minister Abdul Karim Al Kabarti.

In a statement to the Al Ra'i Arabic daily published Friday, the minister denied a report in the Cairo daily Al Ahram that the Jordanian government has expelled 25 Egyptian workers from the Kingdom, noting that the Ministry of Labour, which is charged with organising the employment of foreign labour, did not expel any non-Jordanian worker, Egyptian or otherwise.

In his statement, the minister noted that 162,000 Egyptian workers now live and work in the Kingdom but only 10,000 of them hold valid work permits in violation of Jordanian laws.

Despite the presence of a large number of workers living here in violation of the laws and regulations, the government has not taken any step that could be considered harmful to the Egyptian national interests, the minister said.

The Ministry of Labour is currently conducting a statistical survey to determine the Jordanian labour market's needs of non-Jordanian workers before any move can be taken to reorganise the local labour market, Mr. Kabarti said.

He said that the Labour Ministry has been demanding that the non-Jordanians working here without work permits obtain them in accordance with the regulations. But a number of workers who refuse to abide by the laws following repeated demands are normally asked to leave the country, the minister added.

He said that the government has the right to order any person violating the laws of the country or illegally staying in the Kingdom to leave Jordanian territory.

Non-Jordanian Arabs working here pay JD 100 a year for their work permits, while non-Arab workers are asked to pay JD 300 for these permits.

Egyptian workers have been employed in the agriculture, construction and other fields.

The Vocational Training Corporation has been urging unemployed Jordanian citizens to take up vocational training courses and replace non-Jordanian workers in all fields. Normally, employers found to be offering work to non-Jordanians without work permits are fined.

In an earlier statement, Mr. Kabarti, who took over from former minister Abdul Karim Al Dughmi, said that he intended to



Abdul Karim Al Kabarti introduced no changes in the Ministry of Labour's laws and regulations.

The Ministry of Labour had announced that it had discovered wrong information supplied by businessmen and companies employing foreign nationals. The ministry expressed hope that the employers would cooperate with the ministry so as to reorganise the local labour market and help reduce the problem of unemployment among Jordanians.

Bulgarian official to meet Prince Hassan, continue tour of Kingdom

AMMAN (J.T.) — Bulgarian Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Stoyan Ganev will be received today by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber as well as the speakers of the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament.

Mr. Ganev, accompanied by a five-member delegation, Friday toured archaeological and tourist sites in the Kingdom on the second day of his four-day stay in the country, according to Bulgarian embassy officials.

They said that Mr. Ganev's talks with the Jordanian leaders were expected to dwell on the Middle East question and issues of common concern to Jordan

and Bulgaria.

Mr. Ganev is expected to give a press conference Sunday morning to outline the outcome of his talks in Jordan and his country's position with regard to the Middle East peace process.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, said that Mr. Ganev's meetings with Jordanian officials will also cover cooperation between the two countries in a number of fields.

In a statement to the press upon his arrival in Amman, Mr. Ganev praised the existing Bulgarian-Jordanian ties and voiced his appreciation of Jordan's efforts to attain a just and durable peace. The Bulgarian government, Mr. Ganev said, has offered to host the Arab-Israeli

multilateral talks should it be impossible to hold such meetings in Moscow under the present circumstances and in view of the political changes there.

The Bulgarian minister said that he considered his country as a bridge between Europe and the Middle East, maintaining very strong ties with the different parties to the peace talks. He noted that Bulgaria adopts a very positive stand vis-a-vis the ongoing Middle East peace negotiations.

Mr. Ganev, who is expected to wind up his visit Sunday, was welcomed upon arrival at the airport by Information Minister Mahmoud Al Sharif, Bulgarian embassy staff as well as foreign ministry officials.

Government addressing specialists' complaints of mistreatment, prime minister says

AMMAN (J.T.) — The government is taking steps to find a permanent solution to the problem of some 1,500 specialists who have been complaining about policies adopted by the Jordan Medical Board (JMB) and who staged a two-hour sit in earlier this month to back their demand for fair treatment.

Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker told a meeting at his office that he has issued directives to the concerned authorities to settle this issue on the basis of an interpretation of the Jordan Medical Board's law as given by the Special Council for the Interpretation of Laws at the Prime Ministry.

Health Minister Aref Al Bataineh, Jordan Medical Association (JMA) President Ishaq Maraqa and the association's

board members were present at the meeting.

Around 50 specialists involved in the sit-in presented a memorandum to the board outlining the grievances of 1,500 specialists they claimed to be representing. In their note, the specialists said the board was mistreating the new graduating specialists and blocking their attempts to be registered as specialists with authority to practise in the Kingdom.

The specialists complained in particular about the sets of very difficult examinations which allow only 5 per cent of the candidates to pass. The board law was issued in 1982 to raise the medical standards in Jordan and to issue diplomas to Jordanians being trained for their specialisations.

The note accused the board members of abusing the law and regulations on awarding diplomas or licences to specialists and demanded that such excesses end.

The prime minister said that the board laws and regulations have to be respected so as to safeguard the national interest. The prime minister also emphasised the government's keenness to promote the standard of the medical profession and services at the public and private sectors' levels.

Sharif Zeid called for further coordination between the JMA, the Health Ministry and those working for the public sector and announced that the government would examine ways of offering specialists incentives for a better performance.



GOVERNORS' MEETING — Interior Minister Jawdat Al Shoul Thursday chaired a meeting for the governors during which he stressed the importance of decentralising work. Mr. Shoul called on all governors to facilitate the provision of services to citizens in their different governorates. The meeting was also attended by Interior Ministry Secretary General Saleemeh Hammad.

Jordanians to hand foreign minister petition protesting Iraqi regulation

By Mariam M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

BAGHDAD — A complaint will be handed to Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber today protesting a new Iraqi regulation preventing Jordanians who work for non-Arab media organisations to work in Iraq.

A petition signed by half a dozen employees and freelancers working for mostly Western and Asian television networks asked that Jordan investigate the reason behind the new regulation and intervene through the Iraqi embassy in Amman to have it repealed.

"We want to go back and work in Iraq, but the Iraqi Ministry of Information is making it literally impossible," said a Jordanian cameraman who works with a Western news agency. "They tell us we will get our permits to work but so far not a single permit has been issued."

While the refusal for work permits has so far affected mostly technical staff of television networks, at least one freelance journalist working for a London-based daily has also been denied permission to work in Baghdad.

Several of the Jordanians affected by the decision have said that they believe that the decision came from junior staff at the Information Ministry in Baghdad.

"These people used to make some extra money when there were lots of journalists in

Baghdad. Now there are only Jordanians and so the Iraqis want to take our jobs so that they can make extra money through the networks that they are not making in their jobs," said a Jordanian working for a Japanese television network.

A foreign journalist who has been covering Iraq for the last 12 years thinks political reasons are behind Baghdad's decision to discourage Jordanian members of the foreign media from working in Baghdad.

"The Ministry of Information in Baghdad can control any Iraqi, they can't control Jordanians," said the correspondent, who requested anonymity. "While almost all the Jordanians working in Baghdad are very pro-Iraq, they nevertheless cannot be controlled politically."

"My Jordanian cameraman carries a picture of Saddam Hussein in his wallet as if he were his father. However, as a Jordanian he will still have a different perspective of Iraq than an Iraqi cameraman," said the foreign television correspondent.

The Jordanians, however, feel that they have been treated unfairly by the Iraqis. What angered Jordanian members of the media in particular was that the regulation only applied to Arabs. Non-Arabs, Europeans, Americans and Japanese were free to work once they obtained their visas.

"They said that they wanted

me to go to Amman to renew my working visa," said one angry Jordanian cameraman. "The CNN correspondent, who is an American, was allowed to renew his visa in Baghdad although the Americans have no diplomatic relations with Iraq and are the main force behind keeping up the embargo. I, a fellow Arab and a Jordanian citizen, I am literally expelled," he said bitterly.

The Iraqi position, if based on economic considerations, may be difficult to combat. The unemployment rate in some areas has reached almost 70 per cent and the average income is the equivalent (according to the black market exchange rate) to \$ 18 a month.

Iraqi technicians, translators and others want to work and some see their only chance as taking the jobs currently held by other Arabs.

"They don't expect to get the jobs of the non-Arabs. But with the Arabs they feel there is still room to maneuver," said one foreign correspondent working for a television network in Baghdad.

Meanwhile, Iraqis concerned by Ministry of Information decision have signed a petition. The petition states that they see no reason that the work done by Jordanians for the foreign media could not be done by them.

"The petition said, 'there is no need to allow the Jorda-

nians back in to work," said one Iraqi cameraman who signed it.

The petition was handed to the office of Iraqi Minister of Information Hamed Yousef Hammadi.

While the regulation states that Jordanians are allowed to work with a work permit, a high ranking Ministry of Information official confirmed that the move was intended to reduce the number of Jordanians working for "foreign media" in Iraq.

A foreign television producer, furious over the loss of his Jordanian cameraman due to the new regulation, complained to Deputy Minister Naji Al Hadithi.

"I was told that the work of cameramen, photographers, translators and fixers can be done as well by Iraqis as it can by Jordanians," said the producer, who asked to remain anonymous.

The regulation, which took effect last Monday, expelled over half a dozen Jordanians working in Iraq. While some stayed in Iraq, trying unsuccessfully to soften the stand of the Ministry of Information, most left in a huff.

The decision could affect up to 30 Jordanians working for the television and printed media based in Amman.

The move was explained by many Ministry of Information officials in Baghdad as an "administrative move."

PNC official predicts partial Israeli withdrawal

By Sanaa Abu Huwajj
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The ongoing peace process will result in Israeli withdrawal from South Lebanon, a partial withdrawal from the Golan Heights and some form of autonomy for the Palestinians, a member of the Palestine National Council has said.

Dr. As'ad Abdul Rahman, in a speech to the Rotary Club Tuesday at the Amra Hotel, said the Washington talks were used to prove that any settlement will have to come about through American pressure on the parties.

"It is just the beginning," he said. "The Americans tried to keep a low profile during that time of the negotiations, leaving Israel to manage alone as it wanted. But the result was that the Israelis and the Jordanian-Palestinian delegations spent the six negotiating days in the corridors. Through this, the Americans wanted to show the world that no solution will be reached in

the end without the American intervention."

Israel, through the peace process, will be forced to withdraw from South Lebanon and two thirds of the Golan Heights, leaving its other border with Syria unchanged, Dr. Abdul Rahman said.

"As for the West Bank and Gaza Strip, there will be an autonomy that is more than a self-determination and less than an independent Palestinian state," he said. "This kind of autonomy will lead to unification of the East and West Banks."

The first steps towards this solution, which will probably be taken before the next American presidential elections, will be "freezing the settlements in the occupied territories in return for ending the economic boycott on Israel, together with a series of what is called 'confidence building measures' between the Arabs and the Israelis," Dr. Abdul Rahman said.

Speaking about the Palestinian and Arab decision to join the peace process, Dr. Abdul Rahman said that the Gulf conflict, coupled with changing international realities, forced the parties to accept the conditions imposed by the United States.

In their reaction towards the peace process, the Arabs and the Palestinians can be divided into three categories, he said.

"The first represents the fundamentalist Muslims, the leftists and the national extremists who see the process as nothing but a liquidation of the Palestinian problem," he said. "They strongly believe in our right in having back the whole of Palestine, and in doing so they are in a rejection side and can't provide any alternative solution and can't enter the political framework."

"The second category is the moderates that see the peace process, having gone through several disappointing experiences, a chance in a lifetime and the best bitter alternative," he continued.

"The third category is the women and ordinary laymen who are worried, confused and not sure which attitude they need to adopt toward the whole issue and whether they should be enthusiastic or pessimistic."

Soldiers kill

(Continued from page 1)

10,000 a month during and after the war and has not recovered. An average of 9,000 immigrants have been arriving each month since August. A ship carrying 500 Soviet Jews from Odessa arrived in Haifa on Friday (see page 2).

Mr. Dimitz said about 1.2 million Jews from all 15 republics of the former Soviet Union want to come to Israel and that 105,000 have acquired exit permits. Only a third of those who have exit permits have entry visas to Israel. Israel still expects up to one million Soviet Jews to have immigrated by the year 1995.

Israel preparing

(Continued from page 1)

man Shoval said. "Even if they wish to determine their future, we will not be able to agree to such a future that would endanger our future. This is why a separate state will not be established," Mr. Shoval, on a holiday visit to Israel, told reporters in Tel Aviv.

Remains of Buckley

(Continued from page 1)

tages since August. Mr. Buckley's were the second set of remains returned within a week. The body of slain U.S. Marine Corps Lieutenant Colonel William Higgins was dumped in Beirut last Sunday. The corpses of one French and one British hostage among seven Westerners who died in captivity are still missing.

Mr. Buckley's kidnapping incensed late CIA Director William Casey. The agency switched spy satellites to photograph hostage hideouts and formed a 40-man Lebanese hostage rescue squad but stopped short of intervention in case the hostages were harmed.

Two German aid workers are the last Western hostages in Lebanon (see page 2).

Regent congratulates Nepal's leader

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Friday sent a cable to King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev of Nepal congratulating him on his country's national day and his birthday. Prince Hassan wished the monarch of Nepal continued good health and happiness and his government and people further progress and prosperity.

Consumption tax raised

AMMAN (Petra) — The Cabinet Thursday endorsed a decision raising the consumption tax on iron bars used for construction JD25 to JD40 per tonne, effective Dec. 25.

Accident kills one

TAFLEH (Petra) — A 27-year-old Jordanian was killed and 14 others were injured during a road accident involving a passenger bus and a truck. The accident took place near Hassa Bridge in the south of Jordan. A passenger bus operating on the Amman-Tafleh route hit a truck driven by Walid Ali Al Bannawi. The collision resulted in the killing of 27-year-old Saleh Mansour Al Amamreh and injuring 14 others, who were all rushed to Tafleh Hospital.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- Art and ornamentation exhibition by Sabah Hadidi at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- Art exhibition by Jumana Al Hussein at Abdul Hameed Shomaa Foundation Gallery — 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

King congratulates Soviet republics

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Thursday sent cables to presidents of the Soviet independent republics, congratulating them on their independence and wishing them continued success in their efforts to achieve further progress and prosperity. He also expressed support for the establishment of world peace and stability. The King voiced Jordan's interest in enhancing the ties of friendship and cooperation with these states and their peoples. King Hussein also sent a cable to the outgoing Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev voicing his appreciation and respect for him. The King recalled the good personal relations between him and Mr. Gorbachev and wished him continued good health and happiness.

Jordan Times

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Jordan Times advertising department.

Shamir's sinister commandment

IT IS HARD to imagine how the Arab-Israeli peace talks can come out with anything as long as Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir keeps on talking and thinking the way he does. In his impassioned speech last week before the Likud central committee conference in Tel Aviv, Shamir uttered unpardonable words that appear to undermine the peace parley by leaving the Arabs dazed and bewildered. When Shamir says that his negotiators, "are representing the state of Israel honestly and wisely" and that in Madrid and Washington "they had engraved on their hearts and in front of their eyes the commandment: Keep the land of Israel and bring peace," one wonders what is the fate of U.N. Security Council Resolution 242 in the prime minister's vocabulary? This is not all, however. Shamir went on to describe his emissaries to the Washington peace negotiations as "messengers of good deed," for trying to achieve peace with their Arab counterparts without "giving up land." As for the Israeli settlers in the occupied Arab territories, the Israeli leader had heaps of praise for them after describing them as the "true emissaries of Israel who deserve to be blessed." Such words, it could be said, may be mere election campaign rhetoric that Shamir may need not mean. However, given the record of Shamir and his extremist Likud bloc, it would be safe to conclude that the Israeli prime minister had meant every word he said. That, of course, puts the Arabs out in the cold.

As if such dumping of cold water on the peace process is not enough, Shamir went out of his way to castigate the Labour Party, the Citizens Rights Movement and the Mapam Party for allegedly siding with Israel's worst enemies. He compared them to "murderous terrorists" simply because they advocate give and take negotiating posture for their country. Such atrocious words against Israel's leftist parties and movements prompted Labour Secretary General Micha Harish to call Shamir as "the last Bolshevik on earth, who is using fascist propaganda to divert public opinion from Likud's failure in every sphere."

It would seem, therefore, that only Israel's next national elections may save the peace process. Then and only then would the Israeli people pronounce themselves clearly and unequivocally for or against the ongoing peace talks. Till then, the Arabs and the international community may just have to sit tight and mark time.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Arabic daily attacked Mikhail Gorbachev as a leader who made sure his nation collapsed before leaving office and one who took his lessons about self-destruction from the regimes of the Gulf states. Mr. Gorbachev has now achieved what he had devoted his life to do: to transform a great nation into mini-states unable to compete with the West in anything at any level, the paper noted. The downfall of Mr. Gorbachev was not a loss for anybody but the collapse of the Soviet Union as a great nation is a great loss for the world, the paper continued. It said that Mr. Gorbachev, like the leaders of the Gulf states, was a mere actor in a play orchestrated by the West and a tool for the implementation of a conspiracy far greater in dimension than the human rights, democracy or the migration of Soviet Jews. It said that the Soviet president brought down his nation, which enjoys vast oil wealth, a formidable nuclear arsenal and numerous resources, and has allowed the West to massacre his nation and starve his own people exactly like the regimes of the Gulf states who offered this service to the colonial powers. Mr. Gorbachev was like other heads of state in our region and elsewhere in the world who see the new world order as a tool for destroying a nation and offer service to those wishing to impose hegemony on their countries, the paper added. But, the paper concluded, Mr. Gorbachev is not the Soviet people nor can the heads of state of the Gulf region be the people of their own countries who now live a big lie in a world of deception under foreign banners.

A columnist in Al Dastour daily urged the government to issue a standing order for all government departments and public institutions in Jordan to observe a public holiday at Christmas and the New Year to celebrate these great occasions. Christ is revered by both Muslims and Christians in Jordan and the Christian Arabs are brothers and sisters to the Muslim people who want to share with them this holy occasion, said Mohammad Daoudieh. The writer noted that celebrating the birth of Christ would have a political dimension and would be a message directed at the Christian West, which is monopolising Christianity. Islamic-Christian co-existence has been here for ages with the Christians and Muslims living in tolerance and affection, together joining hands in defence of Arab land and jointly protecting the country from the common enemy, the writer continued. It is only reasonable to give the Jordanian people the chance during a holiday, to share their celebrations and so contribute to further bolstering national unity.

1991 was rude awakening after post-cold war euphoria

By Patrick Worsnip
Reuters

LONDON — For a world still euphoric at the end of the cold war, 1991 provided a rude awakening and a frightening glimpse of what the future could hold: shifting borders, ethnic wars and a growing list of bankrupt new nations.

The Soviet Union collapsed, and with it the old certainties that had given a semblance of stability to world events for 45 years. No one was sure of the rules of the game in the "new world order" proclaimed by U.S. President George Bush.

In the biggest war of a turbulent year, a U.S.-led coalition drove Iraqi invasion forces out of Kuwait but left Iraq in turmoil. Europe's worst conflict since World War II erupted in Yugoslavia, and chaos and anarchy spread in Africa.

It was not all gloom. Middle East peace talks finally spluttered into life, South Africa lurched towards a black-white political settlement and the European Community took a major new stride towards economic and political union.

And, while the Western world ploughed through the trough of a recession, many Asian economies saw vigorous growth and Latin America showed signs of recovery after a "lost decade" of debt and hyper-inflation.

The year was dominated by the dramatic events unfolding in the Soviet Union. Its economy drifted out of control as power shifted from the centre to the 15 constituent republics, almost all of which declared themselves independent.

Matters came to a head on Aug. 19, when eight communist conservatives, including the defence and interior ministers and KGB security police chief, deposed President Mikhail Gorbachev and announced they were taking over to stop the rot.

But the long-feared coup proved a damp squib. Disbanded by the army rank-and-file and denounced by Russian leader Boris Yeltsin, the plotters surrendered after three days.

Mr. Gorbachev was reinstated, but the failed coup doomed his political career along with the Soviet Union itself. On Dec. 8, Russia, Ukraine and Byelorussia set up a new commonwealth of independent states and invited other Soviet republics to join.

Agreement was reached to transfer power at the end of the year from the old union to the commonwealth, but Mr. Gorbachev, a man who arguably changed the course of 20th century history with his perestroika reforms, seemed to have no future role.

Questions looming over the former Soviet Union included: How the new countries would live together — Armenia and Azerbaijan were already virtually at war who would pay the \$70 billion Soviet foreign debt and what would happen to the 30,000 Soviet nuclear weapons, spread across four republics.

This last question overshadowed the international arms control agenda, which had appeared to make a big advance with the signing of a U.S.-Soviet Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty in July and further nuclear cuts promised by Washington and Moscow.

Only one thing appeared certain: All the ex-Soviet nations would be economic basket-cases, lining up with long-standing debtors from Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe for a share of the world's shrinking economic cake.

The decline and fall of the Soviet Union left the United States as the world's sole undisputed superpower.

Washington flexed its military might by leading a 30-nation Western and Arab coalition into battle against Iraq.

Armed with a majority in the United Nations Security Council, Mr. Bush declared that Iraq's August 1990 invasion of Kuwait and the threat it posed to the West's Gulf oil supply would not be tolerated.

The U.S. deadline for Iraq to get out of Kuwait expired on Jan. 15. Allied forces massed in Saudi Arabia then launched operation Desert Storm, a devastating high-

tech bombing campaign leading at the end of February to a short, sharp land offensive.

The Iraqis were bundled out of Kuwait, suffering tens of thousands of casualties and losing about half their army's weaponry. Allied losses totalled a few score of men.

But, sensitive to Arab feelings, Mr. Bush stopped the war just inside Iraq. Overriding advice from some aides, he decided not to press on to Baghdad or seek to topple Iraqi President Saddam Hussein by force, preferring to rely on U.N. economic sanctions.

When Kurdish and Shiite Muslim rebels launched uprisings in northern and southern Iraq respectively, Mr. Saddam was free to use the remnants of his army to crush them.

Watched by Western television cameras, some two million Kurdish refugees trailed across inhospitable mountains into Turkey and Iran before Western governments intervened to protect them with "safe havens" in northern Iraq.

The messy situation in Iraq gave Washington a valuable lesson in the complexities of the post-cold war world. "We're now past the euphoric stage of, 'isn't it great, our ideology prevailed and... communism is dead'," one U.S. official conceded.

Another warning signal came from Yugoslavia, where the federal structure left behind when communist President Tito died in 1980 had reached the point of disintegration a decade later.

On June 25, the republics of Croatia and Slovenia declared independence, sparking a civil war with the federal army and Serbian irregulars in which thousands have already died.

With no prospect of Soviet intervention, Washington saw little reason to get involved, leaving mediation efforts to the European Community and United Nations. Those efforts have so far led nowhere, and under German pressure the EC is now preparing to recognise Croatia and Slovenia by Jan. 15.

The ferocity with which Serbs and Croats battled each other, driven on by memories of mas-

sacred decades ago, sent a chill message to other East European countries which had also seen a surge of ethnic passions after years of communist suppression. Czechoslovakia is already threatened with breakup and ethnic troubles lurk in Romania and Bulgaria too.

The termination of the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact alliance at the end of June left the East Europeans without a security umbrella. The West's NATO, itself struggling to find a role in the new era, declined to admit them as members.

In all the East European states, the joy of overthrowing pro-Moscow communist rule in 1989 gave way to profound economic gloom as the switch from central planning to a free market system proved harder than even pessimists forecast. The region's economic output has slumped 17 per cent in the past two years.

There were many parallels in Africa, where a wind of democratic change brought civil wars, insurrections and inter-ethnic hostility along with an end to fossilised and autocratic regimes.

Seven African presidents fell from power in 1991, four through the ballot box and three at gunpoint, and experienced opposition parties struggled to fill the gap.

Somalia split into two countries after President Mohamed Siad Barre was ousted in January, and Eritrea has only just stopped short of declaring independence from Ethiopia since Marxist military ruler Mengistu Haile Mariam fled in May.

South Africa moved towards the end of white minority rule, abolishing key pillars of its apartheid racial segregation system and arranging talks among 20 black and white parties on the transition to a non-racial society.

It was rewarded by readmitting to world sport after decades of exclusion. But hundreds of blacks died in political clashes during the year and fears grew of a violent backlash by disarmed whites faced with the loss of their privileged position.

There was movement too on the Middle East dispute thanks to

a vigorous diplomatic push by the United States in the aftermath of its Gulf war victory.

Israel and its Arab neighbours, including the Palestinians, gathered together for the first time in Madrid at the end of October for a ceremonial start to peace talks. But follow-up talks in Washington quickly bogged down in procedural wrangles.

Another long Middle Eastern saga, the ordeal of Western hostages in Lebanon, came close to an end in 1991. Nine of them were released by their Iranian kidnappers between August and December, leaving just two Germans in captivity.

Two long-standing Asian conflicts — in Cambodia and Afghanistan — saw breakthroughs during the year.

The Phnom Penh government signed an agreement with three guerrilla groups on Oct. 23 to end 13 years of civil war, but doubts lingered over whether the dreaded Khmer Rouge faction would respect a U.N.-monitored ceasefire and free elections.

The Soviet Union and the United States agreed in September to end arms supplies to the Afghan government and rebels respectively from the end of the year. Here too it was unclear whether this would stop the fighting.

Elsewhere in Asia, the ageing Chinese leadership, one of the world's last bastions of communism, saw out another year and partly recovered from the diplomatic isolation it suffered after bloody crushing pro-democracy demonstrators in 1989.

The world was shocked by the assassination of former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi by a suicide bomber in May. The act broke the Gandhi family's long stranglehold on power.

The global trend to disintegration and national separatism was bucked in Western Europe, where the 12 EC states agreed at a December summit in the Dutch town of Maastricht to merge in time their currencies, their foreign policy and their labour laws.

Britain, kicking and struggling against being dragged into a federal Europe, reserved the

right to "opt out" of the single currency and the social policy.

Despite the promise of the Maastricht accords and the single European market starting in 1993, the Western world remained stuck in an economic rut with growth in Europe for the past year estimated at only just over one per cent.

The crash of Britain Robert Maxwell's multi-billion dollar media empire after the tycoon died at sea off the Canary Islands on Nov. 5 seemed to symbolise the end of the go-getting 1980s.

Things were no better in the United States, where the worst economic performance of any administration since the great depression of the 1930s — more than 900,000 jobs were lost during the year — threatened Bush's reelection prospects in 1992.

But the Western slowdown did not affect everybody. Growth in Asia, excluding Japan, was estimated by the Asian Development Bank at 6.2 per cent, due to increasing domestic consumption and rising regional trade.

Latin America, now embracing economic liberalism as well as political democracy, also looked set for an upswing. Mexico, Venezuela and Argentina, once disaster stories, tamed inflation, reduced debt loads and primed their economies for growth.

But economic chaos threatens in Africa where one adult in 40 has the HIV virus that causes AIDS. The disease is forecast to kill five million or more adults in the next eight years and wipe out at least 25 per cent of the continent's workforce by the year 2010.

Amid the year's dramatic changes on the world's political and economic landscape, its physical landscape continued to be mercilessly polluted, a problem highlighted by the hundreds of oil wells set ablaze by Iraqi occupation forces in Kuwait.

As the environment increasingly forced its way onto the politicians' agenda, the United Nations scheduled a massive "earth summit" in Rio de Janeiro next June, the goal of which will be nothing less than a treaty to save the world.

Another empire falls

THE WEEK IN PRINT

Reviewed by Elia Nasrallah

THE changes in Moscow and the death of the Soviet Union, as an empire, overshadowed most events on the world scene in the past week. Jordanian newspapers provided coverage to these changes. The Middle East peace talks, Iraq and domestic affairs.

Al Dastour daily expressed the Arab World's feelings by voicing regret over the collapse of a great nation... a friend of the Arabs and a source of support for their military and political backing.

The paper said that although the Arabs regret this big loss they can not regret the loss of a man like Gorbachev who, it said, was directly responsible for the disappearance of the great superpower.

A columnist in Sawt Al Shaab directly accused Mr. Gorbachev of being on the payroll of the West, executing orders from Washington and London. Salameh Ekour said that by offering KGB secrets to the American Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and handing over the secrets of the Soviet nuclear arsenal to Mr. Yeltsin, he is trying to get into NATO. Mr. Gorbachev was playing the role designed for him by his Western pay masters.

Issa Shneibi, who writes for Al Dastour, said that the collapse of the Soviet Union will leave a destabilised world in the new world order imposed on the nations of the world by the United States, the sole superpower. There will come a day when the peoples of the world will wish that the Soviet Union existed to prevent a single superpower from oppressing the other nations through military might, the writer said.

In the view of a guest columnist in Sawt Al Shaab, Mr. Gorbachev's perestroika was directed against the Communist Party, but Mr. Yeltsin's perestroika was directed against the institutions of the state. The writer said that while Mr. Gorbachev's perestroika led to the destruction of the Soviet Union, that of Mr. Yeltsin, who is drawing closer to the West, is one that is

taking the people of the former Soviet Union to below the ground level.

Al Ra'i daily likened Mr. Gorbachev's destruction of his country to the behaviour of the leaders of the Arab Gulf states who take decisions designed to further disintegrate the Arab World. Both Gorbachev and the Arab Gulf states' leaders adopted measures to serve the interests of the Western countries in general and the United States in particular, said the daily. It took Mr. Gorbachev seven years to destroy a superpower which was built by Soviet leaders in 70 years; and of course, it was done with the help of the Western powers, the daily added. The paper said that Mr. Gorbachev must have been in close contact with the heads of the Arab Gulf states learning from them ways and methods of causing self-destruction.

Turning to the Middle East, columnist Munes Al Razzaz said that Washington has no right to remain passive, watching the Israelis undoing the U.S. administration's work which is supposed to be leading to a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Writing in Al Dastour, the columnist said it is only the Americans who hold the trump cards and influence over the Jewish state and can force its leaders to comply with the requirements of peace. Washington realises that the Arabs have no means of forcing Israel to comply with the international legitimacy and that the world is waiting for the United States to take proper action to end the Israeli occupation in implementation of U.N. Security Council resolutions, the writer said.

He said that the U.S. administration should honour its commitments and uphold the principles it has been advocating in order to achieve the aspired peace.

It is not important to see negotiations continuing endlessly without reaching a solution to the conflict, said the Sawt Al Shaab daily. The paper said that the Arab negotiators in Washington or else-



where should realise that Mr. Shamir wants to impose capitulation on the Palestinians and the Arab countries at large, as he disregards the international legitimacy and refuses the idea of swapping land for peace.

He said that the Arab countries involved in the peace negotiations should demand that the U.S. administration take a more serious position and force Israel to comply with the rules. Unless the U.S. administration persuades or influences Israel into accepting peace based on justice, the second round of talks, due in Washington on Jan. 7, would have the same fate as that of the first round, said a columnist in Sawt Al Shaab.

Mustafa Abu Libdeh said the Arabs are pessimistic about the outcome of the talks in general and would be totally frustrated should the U.S. adhere to its present passive position.

But in the view of Salameh Ekour, his colleague in Sawt Al Shaab, the peace process was still to be invigorated. The United States has been busy with the events in the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia as well as preparations for the election in the coming year, he said.

The writer expressed his view that the Jewish state's obstinacy and intransigence will face the U.S. administra-

tion sooner or later, provided the Arab countries involved in the peace process keep up their pressure on Washington to ensure a just settlement.

Christmas 1991 has found the Israelis still in control of the lives of Christians and Muslims in the holy land which the Israelis continue to occupy in defiance of the whole world, said Sawt Al Shaab in an editorial. As well as shortening the peace process in Washington, Israel has now escalated its repressive and terrorist campaign against the Palestinian people now that the U.N. General Assembly has scrapped a resolution equating Zionism with racism, said the daily.

The paper said that the U.N. General Assembly should have made it a condition, for scrapping the 1975 resolution, that Israel relinquish the land it had occupied for a quarter of a century.

A columnist in Al Ra'i said now that Butros Ghali, an Arab, is secretary general of the United Nations, it is hoped that he would give more attention to the Arab issues. Bader Abdul Haq said that the presence of Mr. Ghali at the helm of the United Nations is a historic chance for the Arab Nation to seek his assistance in bringing justice to the Arab World and have all U.N. resolutions implemented.

Columnists in the daily press also directed attention to the plight of the Jordanian-Palestinian community still living in Kuwait in the wake of the Gulf crisis.

Salah Al Qallab said that the Kuwaiti campaign against this community was still on and the innocent citizens who built the emirate are being oppressed for no reason.

A columnist in Sawt Al Shaab echoed the same view and said that the Kuwaitis are finding different pretexts and excuses to dispose of the Palestinians and the Jordanians instead of recognising their great service and expressing gratitude to them. Ahmad Dabbas said that the Jordanians and Palestinians are arrested, persecuted and evicted for no reasons; he urged the international humanitarian organisations to intercede on their behalf and end their ordeal.

Dabbas, in another column, turned his attention to the situation in Iraq and the plight of the innocent children there. UNICEF, which is supposed to be an organisation that caters for the needs of children world wide, is expressing regret that it has no sufficient funds to buy medicine and food for the Iraqi children, said the writer. He called on UNICEF to free itself from the

American hegemony and provide the Iraqi children with their needs.

Dwelling on the question of saving the Iraqi children from diseases, hunger and death, Khaled Mahadin quoted UNICEF's positive statement represented in a call to the world to come to the aid of the Iraqi children now facing this tragedy.

Writing in Al Ra'i, the columnist paid tribute to the organisation and echoed its call on the civilised communities to come to the aid of the destitute citizens.

Under title, "the deputies violate the laws and rules," a columnist in Al Ra'i daily criticised members of Parliament for smoking in non-smoking areas. The columnist, who preferred to remain anonymous, said that Parliament members enact laws banning smoking in public areas while they themselves violate the same rules in Parliament where hundreds of people sit to follow up the debates. These deputies consider the immunity they have as an authority to break the rules at will be asked.

Many people have been lately complaining about the inefficiency of the Telecommunications Corporation (TCC) services, and a columnist in Al Ra'i daily expressed the public dissatisfaction.

He said that the TCC for example, offers citizens a sheet on which to write telegrams they intend to send with a note saying that the corporation is not responsible for the loss of the cable.

Salah Abdul Samad said that by so doing, the TCC is telling the citizens they should forfeit all rights of demanding that the telegram should reach its destination.

Two columnists in Sawt Al Shaab, Suleiman Barnawi and Ahmad Dabbas, hailed a decision by the prime minister to end the practice of offering congratulations to the new government and said that such negative practice should have disappeared long time ago.

They said that the government is called on to pass other measures that rid our society of other bad habits and brighten the image of the public administration.

Handwritten signature/initials in a box.

Islamists sweep Algerian polls

(Continued from page 1)

The FLN campaigned on a platform for continued economic and political reform and a coalition to resolve the country's foreign debt problems, which have reduced many of its 25 million people to poverty.

The FIS has peaked at this first round. In the second there will be an appreciable difference," former Prime Minister Mouloud Hamrouche of the FLN told a news conference before the first official provisional results.

But preacher Mohammed Houmeini told worshippers in Kouba: "The people have rejected the accusation they were not Muslims."

"You other parties must announce your repentance publicly because you were mistaken," he added.

The fundamentalists, who draw their support from the urban poor and unemployed, have been the country's most potent political force since they swept regional elections last year in Algeria's first-ever multi-party contest.

It is unknown exactly what kind of government the FIS would operate. Their stated aim is to install a democracy guided by Islam. But liberal parties say "Islamic law is inconsistent with democratic ideals."

The party presents a moderate face to the West, stating that it favours free-market economic reforms and would not impose the harsher penalties of Islamic law.

But hardliners pressure shopkeepers and restaurants not to serve alcohol, intimidate women into wearing traditional veils, and advocate a separation of the sexes in school.

Supporters staged violent campaign riots last spring, forcing President Benjedid to impose a state of emergency and postpone the original June 27 election date.

At least 55 people were killed in clashes with security forces. The top FIS leaders, Mr. Madani and Ali Belhadj, remain in a military prison on charges of treason and inspiring revolt.

Hardliners had refused to participate in the elections until both were freed. Moderate acting leader Hachani announced only

Dec. 15 that the party would contest the vote.

The victory comes amid a wave of Muslim fundamentalism sweeping North Africa. President Zine Al Abidine Ben Ali of Tunisia has outlawed fundamentalist groups and accused them of trying to overthrow his government. In Morocco, fundamentalist students battled leftists and police in several cities this fall.

The fundamentalist gains caused immediate nervousness in France that fundamentalist extremism could cause a fresh wave of North African immigrants.

"An exodus of numerous Algerians will flee the 'Islamic paradise' if the second round permits the FIS to take power in Algeria," said Jacques Rousseau of Recours-France, an extreme-right group.

Others pitted in the run-offs include 13 candidates from the Front for Socialist Forces, three from the Berber-based Rally for Culture and Democracy, two from the Social Democratic Party, and seven independents. Two small, moderate fundamentalist parties will be represented: Hamas, with three candidates, and Ennahda with two.

"What's happening in Algeria will influence the African continent and the Arab World," Premier Sidahmad Ghazali said Thursday.

Mr. Ghazali was referring to the vote, one of the freest ever for a legislature ever held in Africa or an Arab country except Jordan. A total of 49 parties and 5,712 candidates, including 1,209 independents, competed.

There were some irregularities, underscored by Mr. Belkheir's admission that 900,000 voter identification cards needed to cast ballots never reached their destination.

The missing cards could have contributed to the low turnout. Only 58.6 per cent of the 13.3 million registered voters participated in the generally peaceful voting, Mr. Belkheir said.

The FLN legalised political opposition in 1989. It was discredited in October 1988 unrest where soldiers killed scores of youths rioting over the deteriorating living conditions

Asian nations thrive in worldwide recession

By Sonya Hepinstall
Reuters

HONG KONG — Western nations tightened their belts in 1991 while the peoples of Asia — a bright spot in a world of economic gloom — loosened theirs. Increasing domestic consumption and rising regional trade kept their export-oriented economies growing fast even though traditional Western markets wallowed in recession, a Reuters survey showed.

The newly industrialising economies of Taiwan, South Korea, Hong Kong and Singapore are likely to continue to see modest growth this year and next as they boost infrastructure spending and buy more, especially within the region.

Thailand and Malaysia are still barreling forward. Vietnam is struggling against a U.S. trade embargo and India is hampered by a huge foreign debt — but all are optimistic about the future.

Only a few clouds, as in the Philippines and Bangladesh, appear on Asia's economic horizon.

The Asian Development Bank forecast recently that Asia minus Japan would see economic growth of 6.2 per cent this year against 0.4 per cent globally. Estimates for 1992 were 6.5 per cent in Asia compared with a global 2.3 per cent.

Individual estimates for this year vary widely but are impressive, ranging from just one per cent gross national product (GNP) growth in the disaster-stricken Philippines to 8.7 per cent in South Korea, 7.21 in Taiwan, with 8.6 per cent gross domestic product (GDP) in Malaysia.

GNP measures the total value of goods and services, including fixed capital investment and spending. GDP omits income from abroad.

"Simply put, our massive spending on infrastructure is keeping domestic investment high and preventing the global slowdown having much effect," said a senior official at the Council for Economic Planning in Taiwan which plans to spend \$300 billion on such projects between 1991 and 1997.

In Hong Kong, a \$12.6 billion airport planned for completion by 1997 is expected to boost internal demands in the second half of 1992. Analysts said the announcement spurred domestic consumption, giving the economy a boost in mid-year.

Hong Kong competitiveness despite shrinking export markets was helped by using China as a cheap manufacturing base.

"The shifting of most of local manufacturing into south China is helping to make local goods high-

ly competitive in a recessionary environment," said N.K. Mak, an economist at Nomura Research Institute.

Those private-sector export operations — both joint ventures and local Chinese — also pulled China into healthy seven to eight per cent GNP growth this year despite the burden of propping up unproductive state-owned enterprises.

Economists and officials in Hong Kong and Singapore predicted slower growth than in the 1980s, citing weaknesses in major markets such as the recession-hit United States.

For some countries growth is going out of control. South Korea faces an overheating economy fuelled by much-needed infrastructure spending and individual "overconsumption."

The government is campaigning to stop consumers, long stifled by low wages, long working hours and a national obsession with frugality, from buying beyond their means.

Pumped-up domestic consumption helped Malaysia to escape the painful knock-on effects of the West's recession but its economy seemed close to overheating.

"With the cycle peaking in 1990, a downswing seems inevitable as overheating begins to take its toll," said the Malaysian Institute of Economic Research, a private economic think tank.

"Unperturbed, the economy grew aggressively despite detrimental repercussions from the external environment."

Many countries are starting to show the strains of years of high growth. Businessmen in South Korea, Malaysia and Thailand complain infrastructure has not kept pace.

Thailand's economy, expected to grow by seven to eight per cent this year, expanded by an average 11.6 per cent in 1988-1990. But a shortage of construction materials, skilled workers and middle-level executives worsened.

"These constraints will not allow the Thai economy to grow very high any more," said economist Prayphol Khumsad.

Corruption and the power of a small elite over the economy is still a major issue in some countries.

"The issue here is not growth. There is a disease in the Indonesian economy... declining honesty, putting public money into private hands and the concentration of political power and the tension created with economic decentralisation," said Harjo Wignjowijoto, a private economist in Indonesia.

Other economies are burdened by debt. Manila, hit by a series of disasters and spending curbs, needs fresh funds from foreign

donors and creditors to meet its growth target this year.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has completed a review of economic performance but is withholding endorsement pending the senate's passage of

measures to curb the public sector deficit.

The IMF influenced economic planners in India, where total external debt rocketed from \$41 billion in 1986 to \$71 billion by last March, third largest in the

developing world.

Even with free-market reforms, economists say several factors will retard growth. They include tight money, annual inflation of around 13.5 per cent and a six per cent drop in exports in

dollars terms in the first six months of the fiscal year that began in April.

Vietnam, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh struggled to introduce market reforms stifled in the past by ideology or authoritarian rule.

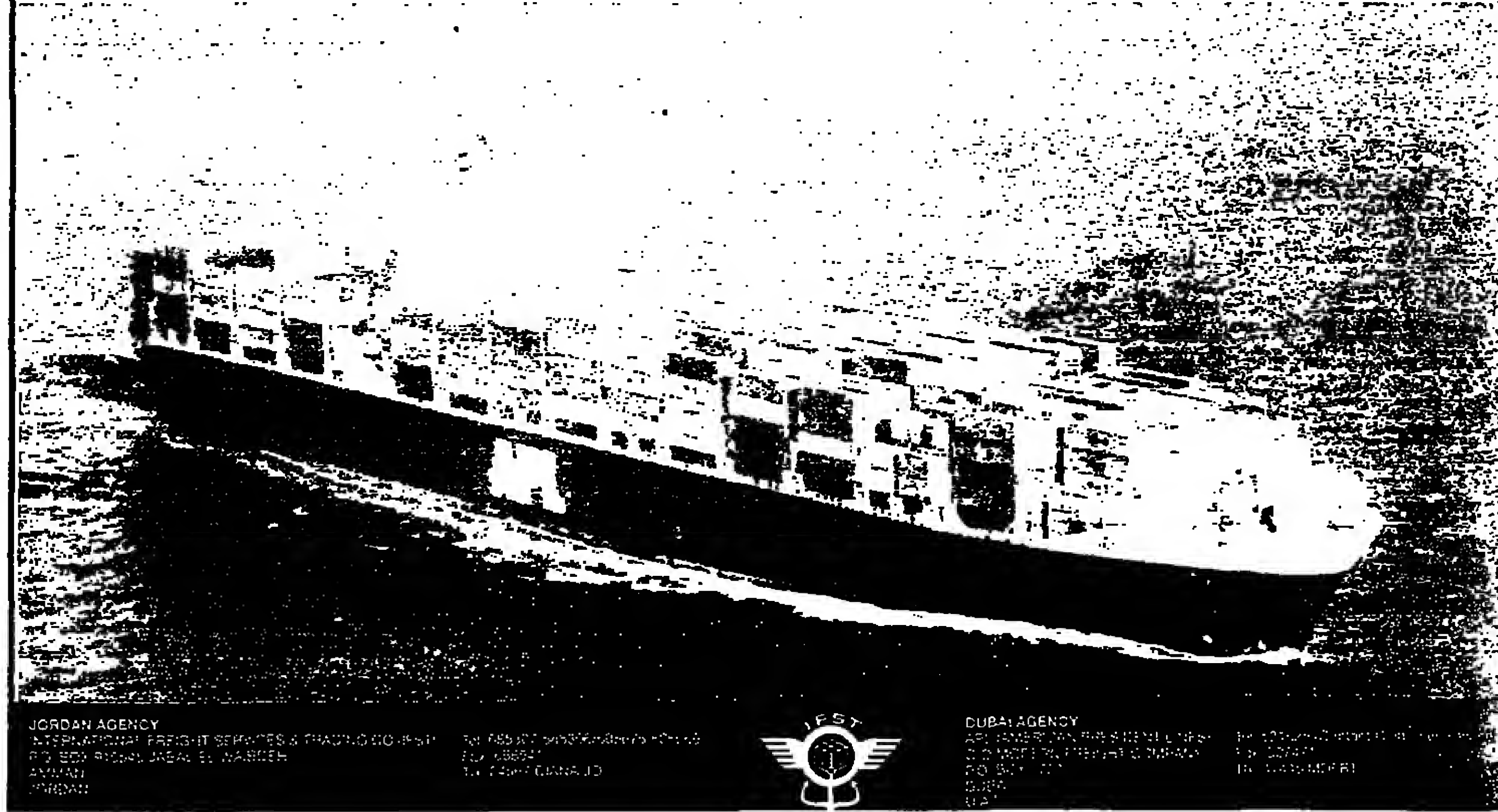
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- All Arabian Gulf ports
- All Red Sea ports



The American waters that run

(Continued from page 1)

the Americans, according to a well-informed Arab diplomat in Washington, did not preclude intervention at a later stage. He maintained that the U.S. will not permit a breakdown of the talks.

"The administration will continue to distance itself as long as the talks continue," said the diplomat. "They will not seek confrontation but will intervene if the continuity of the talks is seriously threatened."

Some Arab delegates say the Arabs should not depend on a great deal on the U.S. and instead emphasise the "sustainability of our own task, which is based on a just cause, and improve our skill of negotiations," as one delegate put it. But many dismiss this assessment as "naïve" saying that without effective U.S. intervention success in the negotiations is unlikely.

Whatever the reason or combination of reasons for the backtracking in the American position, it is unlikely at this stage that the administration will pursue a different course in the third round of bilateral talks.

Although President George Bush expressed his disappointment at the lack of progress in the negotiations, he indicated that when bilateral talks resume in early January, the U.S. will continue to play the catalyst role it played during the just-completed round.

"I was disappointed," President Bush said when foreign journalists asked him about the six days of wrangling and exchange of accusations between Israel and the Arab delegations. "I felt that a lot of time was wasted talking of modalities and locations, and obviously we would have liked to see more progress," the president said after the talks ended.

If Washington maintains its "observer" role, the Israelis, along with the Jordanians and Palestinians, may be forced to go back to square one when the talks resume.

Analysts say that the Arabs will either have to collectively put pressure on the Americans to resolve the dispute impeding the discussion of crucial issues on the peace agenda, or to work out a formula with the Palestinians to overcome the problem of Palestinian representation so as not to continue futile diplomacy on the couch and to avoid offering too many concessions.

"We have to improve Arab

coordination and put pressure on the Americans between now and Jan. 7 to effectively get them involved," said one delegate.

"We cannot put too much pressure on the Palestinians to change their position because they already appear in their people's eyes as having made many concessions to get to the negotiating table," he added.

Palestinian delegation spokeswoman Hanan Ashrawi said that the Palestinians were under pressure from their constituency in the occupied territories not to give in on the issue of representation.

"One message they (Palestinians in the occupied territories) kept sending: You cannot give in on this issue, this is a very serious issue," Dr. Ashrawi said.

Although most analysts agree that Israel deliberately made the Arab negotiators' position more difficult by launching a crackdown in the occupied territories, they say the Palestinians played into Israel's hands by leaving open legal loopholes in their argument for legal representation.

One of the ideas floated for breaking the impasse if American intervention fails or does not materialise, is to have the other Arab sides adopt the issue and collectively raise Palestinian demands.

The Washington talks, many observers agree, have demonstrated that U.S. detachment from the process served Israeli strategy aimed at aborting any potential progress on the land-for-peace formula and recognition of Palestinians as a separate political entity.

This strategy manifested itself in statements made by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir that the Israeli team negotiating with the Jordanians and Palestinians had no mandate to discuss interim self-government arrangements for the Palestinians in the Israeli-occupied territories.

Mr. Shamir's actions during the Washington talks were consistent with his behaviour before and during the Madrid conference and analysts are increasingly convinced that the present Israeli government's strategy is maintaining the status quo on all fronts despite the fact that over 60 per cent of the Israeli population favours a land-for-peace formula.

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Liverpool seeks scoring touch at rivals Everton

LONDON (R) — Liverpool, making a later than usual push for the title, must rediscover their goal touch in the English first division soccer derby at city rivals Everton Saturday.

A 0-0 draw at Queen's Park Rangers Thursday halted a run of three successive victories for Liverpool, who have been plagued by injuries this season.

Champions six times in the last decade, Liverpool are 13 points adrift of leaders Manchester United, who visit second-placed Leeds Sunday.

But former England captain Gerry Francis, the QPR manager, said: "Don't write off (Liverpool's) title chances yet."

"If you count them out, then it is at your peril. Liverpool are still the masters of passing the ball around — probably the best in the country," Francis said.

"They have not quality players and with people like John Barnes still to return I can see them challenging for the title."

Liverpool manager Graeme Souness appealed for patience.

"The time to judge us is when we've got everybody back," he insisted. "Any club in any league in any country would suffer with having players like John Barnes and Mark Walters injured — players who are capable of turning a game."

Liverpool were also without promising youngster Steve

McManaman, who went down with flu Thursday morning but is expected to be fit for the match at Goodison Park.

Arsenal Manager George Graham is expecting his team to rediscover at fourth-placed Manchester City the commitment that earned them the title last season but deserted them in a dismal 1-0 defeat at bottom club Luton Thursday.

"They have to go away now and rest and get their attitude right for Maine Road because this was our worst performance of the season in terms of ability and attitude," Graham said.

"We had bad games last season but usually still managed to draw them or even win them through self-motivation or self-will. Against Luton we were badly lacking in both those things."

Arsenal were unlucky to lose midfielder David Hillier after a freak training-ground collision and Swede Anders Limpar, who was left with double vision after a first-minute clash with Luton's Mark Pemberton. He was pulled off shortly before halftime.

Graham revealed Friday that Limpar had broken his jaw and would be sidelined for six weeks.

City could be without midfielder Steve McMahon, who suffered a hamstring strain in his debut in the 2-1 win against Norwich following his move from

Liverpool Tuesday. Manchester United paid a price in thrashing Oldham 6-3.

Slipper Bryan Robson is out for two to three weeks after aggravating a calf strain in his comeback game and two-goal defender Denis Irwin is struggling to shake off a hamstring injury in time for the clash at Leeds.

Leeds manager Howard Wilkinson said his team's display in Thursday's 3-3 draw at home, when they allowed Southampton to come back from 3-1 down, was the most disappointing of his three years in charge. Leeds have dropped vital points with three successive draws.

But Wilkinson hopes inspirational Captain Gordon Strachan will be back against United. Strachan is having intensive treatment for back trouble.

Nottingham Forest manager Brian Clough apologised after his son Nigel went sent off for the first time in his career seven minutes from the end of Forest's 2-1 win at Tottenham.

The 25-year old striker, who scored the opening goal, was sent off after tackling Spurs scorer, Paul Stewart from behind.

"I'm sorry we caused the referee trouble," Brian Clough said.

England's Stuart Pearce hit the winner with a last-minute free kick.

JORDAN BASKETBALL ROUNDUP

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The relegation of Al Karak and Al Ashrafieh became certain Wednesday when they lost their matches against Al Watani and Al Hussein respectively, thus failing to secure the necessary wins to enable them to keep their place among the first division clubs.

In one of Wednesday's matches, Al Watani beat Al Karak 85-56 in their match played at Al Orthodox court in Amman.

Al Karak, who have shown a considerable improvement since the beginning at the first division matches (despite failing to score any win) lost the match although they played well and lost the first half 40-29.

Meanwhile, at Al Hassan Sports City in Irbid, Al Hussein scored a convincing victory over Al Ashrafieh thus securing fifth place.

Al Ashrafieh could not stop their more experienced foes from expanding the difference after Al Hussein won the first half 53-25 and went on to win the match 110-54.

In one of this week's surprises, Al Jazireh lost a golden chance of beating titleholders Al Ahli.

Al Jazireh played in a well coordinated manner but their scoring was low although they managed to lead 31-22, ending the first half 31-27 to their advantage.

Although Al Ahli were hampered by many personal fouls, they managed to catch up and win the match 70-58, thanks to their experience.

The other surprise of the week was Al Watani's loss to Al Ashrafieh.

Al Ashrafieh won the first

half 32-24. However, Al Watani's tighter defence in the second half enabled them to reduce the difference but Al Ashrafieh were clearly determined not to let the win slip out of their hands as they beat Al Watani 66-65.

In another match at Karak gave it their best but lost the first half 39-32 to Al Hussein. Al Hussein, however, were not content with the slim lead as they expanded the difference to win 87-64.

The upcoming four matches will decide the final standings of the eight teams.

On Sunday, Al Jallil clashes with Al Jazireh at Al Hassan Sports City while the two top teams Al Ahli and Al Orthodox will fight it out at the Sport Palace court, and Al Ashrafieh plays Al Karak at Al Ahli court. Al Hussein will play Al Watani at Al Ahli court Monday.

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New commonwealth makes sport debut in Hopman Tennis Cup

PERTH (R) — The newly formed Commonwealth of Independent States will make its first international sporting appearance at the mixed tennis Hopman Cup Tennis Tournament, starting later Friday.

Former Soviet tennis stars Andrei Cherkasov and Natalia Zvereva had originally entered the cup as the Soviet Union team, but will now play as the Commonwealth of Independent States team, tournament Chairman Paul McNamee said.

Cherkasov is a Russian, while Zvereva is a native of Byelorussia, two of the 11 republics making up the new commonwealth. Their first match is against Britain Saturday.

McNamee said the change of team name was made after Australia officially recognised the commonwealth Thursday and with the agreement of the Russian embassy in Australia.

McNamee said a new flag was being made to fly at the tournament, but an anthem was still to be advised.

"It's all happened very quickly, but everyone is delighted and it is another first for the Hopman Cup," he said.

"Andrei and Natalia are very excited although their main concern is still for the people back home."

The Hopman Cup, in its fourth year, is an eight-day, 12-nation competition.

The inclusion of Germany's Boris Becker and Steffi Graf is a major coup for the organisers of the 600,000 dollar (\$462,000) event at the Burswood Superdome.

Last year's winners Yugoslavia, in the shape of Monica Seles and Goran Prpic, will not be defending their title due to the political turmoil in their homeland. The final of the tournament is on Jan. 3.

Meanwhile, Goran Ivanisevic of Croatia has been given a wild

card entry into next week's \$182,500 Australian Hardcourt Tennis Championships at the Memorial Drive Arena, organisers said Friday.

Ivanisevic, ranked 16th in the world, will be the top seed for the event following the withdrawal of former top-seed Petr Korda of Czechoslovakia and Russian Andrei Cherkasov.

Korda has a back injury, while Cherkasov is recovering from a broken finger, said tournament director Ron Green.

Australian Mark Woodforde, who won the event in 1988 and

1989, qualified for the 32-man main draw following the withdrawal of Korda. Martin Strelba of Czechoslovakia will replace Cherkasov in the draw.

The entries for the tournament, to be played Dec. 30-Jan. 5, are dominated by Europeans, including powerful Austrian left-hander Thomas Muster, who won the event in 1990.

The tournament will be played on synthetic courts and is one of a number of warm-up events for the Australian Open, scheduled Jan. 13-26 at the National Tennis Centre in Melbourne.

SPORTS NEWS IN BRIEF

WBC honours Gorbachev

MEXICO CITY (AP) — The World Boxing Council (WBC) has honoured Mikhail Gorbachev for opening the doors to professional boxing in what used to be the Soviet Union and helping develop the sport in the country. WBC President Jose Sulaiman said Gorbachev was named an honorary member and lifelong counsellor of the 139-nation organisation, with the title of "benefactor of boxing." Sulaiman said in a news release that Mr. Gorbachev's policies enabled such fighters as Victor Potkin, Yuri Aravachov, Nazarov Olzubeck, Smirniy Eliseev, Manvel Avedisyan, Andrei Rudenko, Viacheslav Ivanovski, Dimitri Epishin and Andrei Oreshkin to enter professional boxing. "Mikhail Gorbachev will always be known as the man who placed Russia, the Soviet countries and Eastern Europe on the map of professional boxing," the news release said.

U.S. soccer sets 1992 schedule

CHICAGO (R) — The U.S. men's national soccer team has announced its schedule for an international tournament, including a game against China in San Francisco and road matches against Spain, Ireland and Brazil. The international round-robin tournament, is scheduled for various north eastern U.S. sites yet to be determined, said Bill Nuttal, national teams general manager for U.S. Soccer. The first game on the schedule is on Jan. 25 in Miami against a team from the Soviet Union, or its political successor, followed by a second U.S.-Soviet match on Feb. 2 in Michigan. The U.S. squad will visit Central and South America Feb. 9-22 for matches against Costa Rica and Brazil. Other matches will be announced, Nuttal said. The other games set so far: March 11 against Spain, April 4-China, April 29-Ireland and mid-May against Scotland.

Auriol takes first Paris-Cape Town honours in Libyan desert

SIRTE, Libya (AP) — France's Hubert Auriol won the first 204-km stage of the Paris-Cape Town Rally despite losing his way in a Libyan desert sandstorm.

"I was not sure of my position because new tracks have been made since the road-book was issued," the Mitsubishi driver said after the timed stage from Ben Walid to Abu Negin.

After steering across country, helped by a satellite positioning system, Auriol found himself back on the right track but was surprised to hear he had been the fastest.

Citroen took the next two

places with France's Pierre Lartigue five seconds behind Auriol and Ari Vataneu, favourite to win the 25-day, 12,472 kms haul, in third place.

Lartigue was delighted but the Finn, a four times winner of the Paris-Dakar Rally, made mistakes and was furious.

"I went wide on a corner and got the car stuck on top of a hump," he said after finishing nearly four minutes behind Auriol. "I couldn't drive forwards and backwards and I lost about six or seven minutes. I was angry with myself."

Sweden's Bjorn Waldegaard was delayed with two punctures that knocked his Citroen down to 45th place. He was the only top driver among the 327 starters to have problems.

Stephane Peterhansel, the 1991 Paris-Dakar motorcycle winner, took first honours on a Yamaha 850 despite also getting lost in the desert. Carlos Mas of Spain was second.

The 22-km road link from Abu Negin to Sirte after the timed stage was hit by thunderstorms and torrential rain which soaked the motorcycle riders and turned the desert to mud.

U.S. indoor soccer team returns to Europe with local friends

NEW YORK (AP) — When it went to Europe last time this year, few knew of St. Louis Storm indoor soccer team and even fewer respected it. When the Storm goes back this year, it will have its own fan club.

"When we got there last year, we were a big surprise. Nobody asked us who we were or what we were," said Storm coach Don Popovic recalling last year's Zurich International New Year's Tournament.

But after the Storm blew out FC Lucern 7-1 in the opening game, "agents came to us to keep our players in Europe," Popovic said. "They went after about five or six of our players."

The Storm of the United States' Major Soccer League (MSL) was the first non-European team to compete in the 10-year-old, two-day, six-team event that last year also invited Sparta Prague of Czechoslovakia, Dynamo Zagreb of Yugoslavia and FC Nuremberg of Germany.

The tournament, whose rules are very close to the ones used by MSL since its inception in 1978 —

six-a-side, free substitution, sideboards, time penalties, etc., is used as training by the European teams during the midwinter break.

But for the storm, it was used to carry the American flag.

With the respect for American soccer lacking in Europe, and the MSL the standard bearer for the game in the United States, Popovic and his crew felt a little extra incentive.

After tying Nuremberg 3-3, it beat Dynamo Zagreb and Sparta Prague 4-1, lost to FC Zurich 2-0 and qualified for the final against Zurich. It avenged its only loss, shutting out Zurich 4-0 in the championship game.

"When we walked in to the arena for the final," Popovic remembered, "the entire crowd of 9,000 was cheering 'U.S.A., U.S.A.'"

"I wish you could have seen it. They were cheering 'U.S.A.' and waving American flags all around the stadium ... It was just unbelievable."

The Storm was invited as part of reconciliation and attempt to

improve relations between FIFA, who sanctioned the tournament, the U.S. Soccer Federation and the MSL.

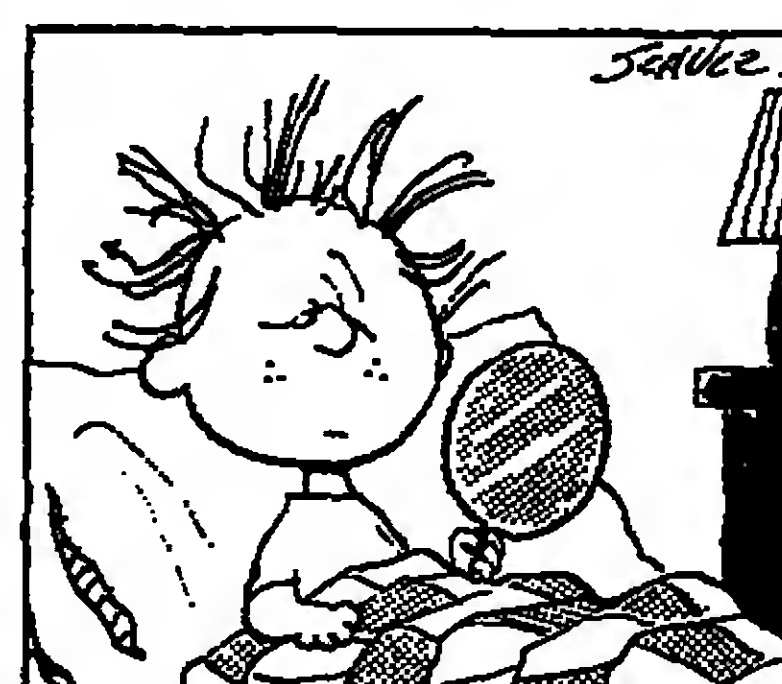
But it also gave the Storm, and the MSL, a European foothold.

"Everybody knows about the St. Louis Storm now," said MSL Commissioner Earl Foreman.

Among those that are aware, and trying to spread the word, are a group of 40 people in Switzerland.

"They were students," Popovic said. "And when they realised we were an American team, they asked if they could form a booster club. They wrote to us later and asked us to send flags and T-shirts and anything else we had."

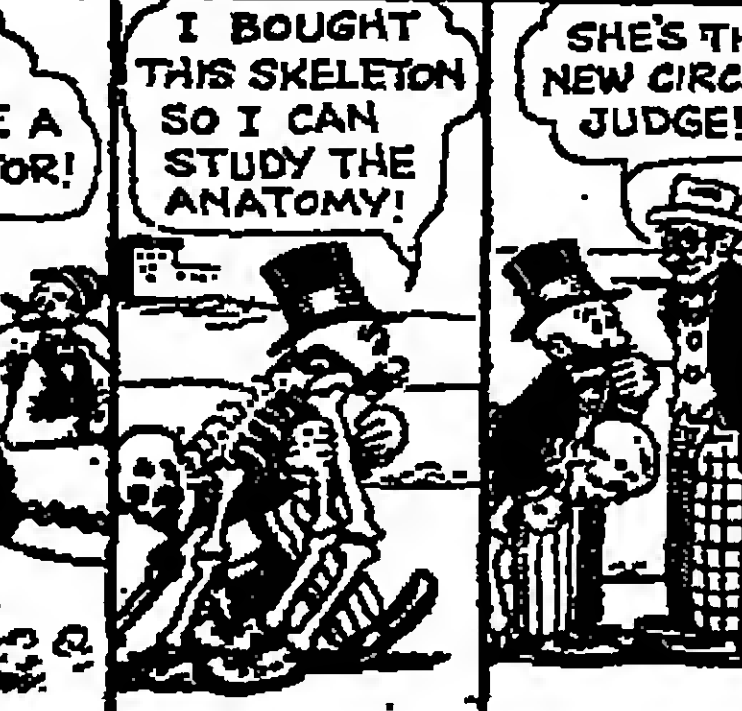
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY DECEMBER 28, 1991

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Do something of a financial nature which is unusual and progressive to block the Moon square to Uranus and Neptune, and the square to Jupiter from Mercury. Be innovative.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You are able to show others how fond you are of them by some compliments or doing some little favors that seems like nothing much but means a great deal to the person honoured.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Now you find that you are the one who should be careful that you do attend to promises made in which events others do most anything you desire from them.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) This is your day to have a wonderful time as you most prefer so long as you do nothing to upset or make a very independent partner upset.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Now you find much to occupy your time that requires you do tasks that are intimate but that make you add to your surroundings.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) This is your time to show you the one who enjoys your friends and that you are ready to join with them in the activities and pleasures you and they like.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) If you do nothing to offend or upset those who dwell beneath the

same roof as you, there are all kinds of chances for you to make a big hit in the outside world.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Stop sticking so close to the usual and prepare to go out to meet new personalities and go to places where you get fine information and expand your horizons.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You have many good and ingenious plans for doing those things that you may enjoy doing but which are a part of everyday living requiring care and intelligence.

Financial Markets

Jordan Times
In co-operation with
Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close	Tokyo Close
Sterling Pound	1.8735	1.8855
Deutsche Mark	1.5205	1.5065
Swiss Franc	1.3515	1.3440
French Franc	5.1965	5.1500
Japanese Yen	127.55	126.65
European Currency Unit	1.3340	1.3465

USD Per STD
European Opening at 8:00 a.m. GMT

Eurocurrency Interest Rates Date: 26/12/1991

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTH	6 MTH	12 MTH
U.S. Dollar	5.12	4.50	4.25	4.31
Sterling Pound	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.65
Deutsche Mark	9.65	9.70	9.65	9.45
Swiss Franc	8.25	8.05	5.15	7.94
French Franc	10.13	10.13	10.15	10.00
Japanese Yen	6.16	5.90	5.65	5.45
European Currency Unit	10.62	10.55	10.56	10.25

Interest bid rates for accounts exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent

Precious Metals	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	357.50	6.80	Silver	5.95	0.055

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin Date: 26/12/1991

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6740	0.6760
Sterling Pound	1.2690	1.2700
Deutsche Mark	0.4470	0.4490
Swiss Franc	0.5010	0.5030
French Franc	0.1300	0.1307
Japanese Yen	0.5314	0.5321
Dutch Guilder	0.3945	0.3945
Swedish Krona	0.1225	0.1229
Italian Lira	0.0589	0.0592
Belgian Franc	0.02140	0.02157

Other Currencies Date: 26/12/1991

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.7590	1.7620
Lebanese Lira	0.0766	0.0770
Saudi Riyal	0.1744	0.1500
Kuwaiti Dinar	—	—
Qatari Riyal	0.1626	0.1635
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.2150
Omani Riyal	1.7250	1.7330
UAE Dirham	0.1826	0.1835
Greek Drachma	0.3725	0.3745
Cypriot Pound	1.5295	1.5405

CAS Indices for Amman Financial Market

Index	24/12/1991 Close	25/12/1991 Close
All-Share	128.65	129.23
Banking Sector	106.01	106.07
Insurance Sector	126.97	126.97
Industry Sector	162.59	163.47
Services Sector	142.79	143.41

December 31, 1991 - 100

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at mid-session on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Friday.

One Sterling	1.8790/8810	U.S. dollar
One U.S. dollar	1.1596/1601	Canadian dollar
	1.5128/38	Deutschmarks
	1.7060/80	Dutch guilders
	1.3430/40	Swiss francs
	31.12/17	Belgian francs
	5.1650/1750	French francs
	1144/1145	Italian lire
	125.70/80	Japanese yen
	5.5300/5400	Swedish crowns
	5.9600/9700	Norwegian crowns
	5.8900/9000	Danish crowns
One ounce of gold	355.50/356.00	U.S. dollars

Tokyo formulates new 92/93 budget to drum up domestic demand in soft-landing process

TOKYO (R) — Japan's draft budget aims to give the economy a soft landing and deliver on a promise to Washington that Tokyo will drum up domestic demand, officials have said after it was approved by the cabinet.

The budget for the next fiscal year considered economic growth but "should not stimulate the economy because it is in the process of soft-landing towards a more balanced growth," said Finance Minister Tsutomu Hata.

He later quoted Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa as saying the budget contained good signs for the economy.

Economic analysts said the seemingly contradictory comments reflect contrasting priorities among policymakers.

Japan's central bank wants to avoid inflation and a rekindling of Japan's so-called "bubble economy" of the 1980s, marked by soaring real estate prices and an overheated stock market.

But many elected politicians are less concerned about that than the need to prevent an economic slowdown so painful that the public punishes them at the polls.

The ministry of finance (MOF) budget — for the year starting April 1, 1992 — proposed total spending of 72.2 trillion yen (\$568 billion).

That is up 2.7 per cent from an initially planned 70.3 trillion yen (\$553 billion) in the current fiscal year. That growth rate will be the lowest in five years, MOF officials said.

The government loans and investment programme, excluding revenues from postal savings, pension and other funds, will see a two-digit growth for the first time since 1979/80, when the year-in-year rise was 13.1 per cent.

This will help prevent the economy from slumping and implement Japan's pledge to the United States to spend 430 trillion yen (\$3.38 trillion) at home over 10 years from 1991/92, MOF officials said.

The pledge is a result of the bilateral structural impediment

initiative talks concluded last year, in which the U.S. urged Japan to open markets and spur domestic demand.

The MOF proposal features drastic spending cuts and high bond issues to make up for a revenue shortfall of 2.2 trillion yen (\$17.3 billion) projected due to a slowdown in economic growth since the third quarter of this year.

But the draft also contains a package to boost government loan and investment programmes to support small and medium-sized companies and improve Japan's infrastructure through huge public works spending over 10 years.

Topping the spending list is expansion of bullet trains, improvement of sewage facilities and parks, and promotion of housing construction.

These targets reflect Mr. Miyazawa's view that the government must provide a basis for bringing a bigger share of Japan's economic wealth to the general public, MOF officials said.

Poland's new economic chief aims at stopping recession

WARSAW (R) — Jerzy Eysymont, Poland's new economic supremo has said that he hoped to stop the country's deepening recession in 1992 at the expense of letting inflation stay at around 60 per cent.

"I think we will have to live with inflation at about the same level as this year," Mr. Eysymont, who will head the economic

committee of the newly appointed cabinet of Prime Minister Jan Olszewski, told Reuters.

The outgoing government of Jan Krzysztof Bielecki lowered inflation from 250 per cent in 1990 to an estimated 60 per cent this year and planned to bring it down to around 30 per cent in 1992.

Mr. Eysymont, who retains the post of planning minister that he held in the outgoing cabinet, was a critic of former finance minister Leszek Balcerowicz's tough programme of monetary constraint, which won approval from the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

"There is a need to create some instruments to combat recession although no one responsible would carry out policies that would bring hyperinflation back," Mr. Eysymont said in an interview shortly after the new cabinet was approved.

At a parliamentary hearing, he said he wanted to rekindle the economy by increasing the money supply through cheaper credits.

Mr. Balcerowicz's policies, under which inflation was tamed and the Polish currency stabilised, led to an almost 30 per cent fall in industrial output and more than two million jobs.

Mr. Eysymont expected industrial stagnation next year, followed by moderate growth in 1993.

"I hope that in 1993, which should be the first year of economic growth, it will be possible to visibly lower inflation," he said.

He added that the IMF-approved programme required renegotiation with the fund and asked: "Can one agree to conditions which today prevent us from fulfilling these agreements? Renegotiation is indispensable."

IADB reports record \$5.3 billion aid loans

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — Record aid loans worth \$5.3 billion were approved this year by the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) for western hemisphere countries, the bank has announced.

The bank is owned by 44 governments, with the United States the biggest contributor. The amount of lending rose sharply from last year's \$3.8 billion to match the amounts going to the area from the World Bank. That bank has 156 member governments and lends to Asia, Africa and Europe as well.

According to the World Bank, Latin America and the Caribbean owed about \$457 billion at the end of 1990.

Loans from the IADB of \$572 million to four countries helped them to reduce total indebtedness by nearly \$1 billion, the announcement said. The countries were Colombia, Chile, Bolivia and Jamaica. These new loans help governments buy up their old loans at a discount, since creditors doubt they can be repaid in full.

"While bank achievements in 1991 were considerable, crucial challenges loom on the horizon," bank president Enrique Iglesias told the bank's executive board at a closed-door meeting.

"The region needs massive assistance for its social sector, industrial reorganisation, physical and technological integration and institutional strengthening," he pointed out.

Almost half the bank's lending this year — \$2.6 billion — went to help farming and industry. Infrastructure such as roads and communications accounted for \$1.4 billion while \$1.3 billion went to the social sectors, largely health and education.

The bank plans to approve another \$6.2 billion worth of loans in 1992 and \$7.2 billion in 1993. Over 32 years, it has lent more than \$52 billion.

Increases in the bank's lending were made possible by an increase in its capital in 1989. That came after three years of negotiations in which the United States and other large donors tightened control over bank policies. They can now delay loans they disapprove for as long as a year.

Rapidly disbursed loans for privatisation and for reorganisation of government-owned industry increased to \$2.1 billion from \$1.3 billion in 1990. Such loans also help hard-pressed governments keep up their payments to private banks.

The IADB's statement said first estimates show it well on its way to reach its goal of lending \$22.5 billion for the years 1990-93. Mr. Iglesias said representatives of member governments will explore the possibility of increasing contributions for 1994-1997. Meanwhile, Latin America's

economy is on the mend after being shaken to its foundations by free market reforms, but economists question whether the region was headed for sustained recovery or just a brief spurt of growth.

Many economists believe the International Monetary Fund's forecast of a golden decade for Latin America shows signs of being borne out as growth in Mexico, Chile and Venezuela gratters speed and Argentina starts to haul itself out of the doldrums.

IMF Director Michel Camdessus raised eyebrows when he predicted last year that Latin America could grow faster than Asia by the mid-1990s but even sceptics are coming round to his view.

"I think we are on the threshold of a good 10 years for Latin America," a U.S. banker based in Washington said.

The United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America recently forecast four per cent average growth this year for all countries in Latin America except Brazil and Peru, which are still grappling with high inflation and big public deficits.

But critics say widening income gap between rich and poor and neglect of mass education could eventually trip up the process of recovery.

"The problem is we are not educating people and paying enough attention to other aspects of development," said Gustavo Marques, a U.S.-trained lecturer at IESE, an influential business school in Caracas.

"Sooner or later you are going to hit a wall. Economies will not be able to diversify," he added. "Some economists seem to think that all you need to do is guarantee basic macroeconomic equilibrium and the rest will look after itself."

The new optimism in Latin America, reflected in a recovery in investment and booming stock markets, has been grounded in mounting confidence among investors that governments will stick to free market reforms at any cost.

One-by-one throughout the region, governments of all persuasions have ditched outmoded protectionist policies and enthusiastically



Enrique Iglesias

cally deregulated their economies and privatised state enterprises.

"The perception is that a new model is in place and that it is good for profits. People see this model taking firm roots and they do not expect a swing back to populism soon because populism did not work," said an economist with an international organisation based in Latin America.

But in Brazil, accounting for 40 per cent of the region's economic output, President Fernando Collor's government is still struggling to tame inflation and his bid to win support to privatise swaths of state-run industry is slow.

Economic recovery coming after a decade of retrenchment ushered in by a crushing debt crisis, is expected to widen Latin America's huge gap in wealth distribution.

"Without doubt, these new forms of operation are based on even greater inequalities in income than in the past, greater precariousness of employment," the U.N. economic commission said in a recent report.

In Chile, a pioneer of the economic reforms now sweeping the continent, President Patricio Aylwin's democratic government has balked at distributing wealth for fear of upsetting the fast growing economy he inherited from General Augusto Pinochet.

However, some analysts believe the key to sustained economic growth and productivity lies in a steady flow of investment from abroad and integration into the world economy.

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Ukraine sees progress on military differences

MOSCOW (R) — Ukraine moved closer to resolving its differences with Russia over nuclear arms control and other military matters at high-level talks Friday, Ukrainian officials said.

"The major questions were settled," Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk told local reporters after talks in Kiev with Marshal Yevgeny Shaposhnikov, the former Soviet defence minister who is acting military commander of the new Commonwealth of Independent States.

"All sides were satisfied with the discussions," Mr. Kravchuk's spokesman Vladimir Shlyaposhnikov added.

The talks, which began Thursday, were aimed at tackling important differences in advance of a summit of the 11 member-states in the Byelorussian capital Minsk Monday.

Former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev handed over the control system of the 30,000-odd Soviet nuclear weapons to Russian leader Boris Yeltsin Wednesday.

The four former Soviet republics where nuclear weapons are deployed — Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Byelorussia — have agreed Mr. Yeltsin should have authority to fire the weapons, but only in consultation with their leaders.

Ukraine, the second most powerful of the republics, wants a more concrete power of veto.

The Minsk meeting will also tackle differences between Russia and Ukraine over economic reform, which according to the commonwealth agreement is supposed to be coordinated between the member-states.

Ukrainian leaders have publicly attacked Mr. Yeltsin's plan to free most prices in his giant re-

public on Jan. 2.

Ukraine proposed Tuesday the move, already postponed from Dec. 16, be put off a further two weeks to give other republics more time to prepare for the shock. Russia refused.

Ukraine has brought forward its own plans to issue its own coupons as a parallel semi-currency to roubles and threatened further measures.

Mr. Gorbachev has promised to support the new commonwealth, but made clear he fears it will prove unworkable and lead to economic confusion and ethnic violence.

The last of the Soviet troops which have tried since 1988 to keep the peace in a territorial dispute between the southern republics of Armenia and Azerbaijan were preparing to pull out.

Armenian officials said Friday the troops, from the former Soviet Interior Ministry, had already left the disputed region, Nagorno-Karabakh. But an Azeri spokesman said 30 per cent were still there.

More than 1,000 people have been killed in four years over the enclave, which has a mainly Armenian population but which Moscow awarded to Azerbaijan in 1923.

Colonel-General Vasily Savin, head of the former Soviet Interior Ministry troops, told the daily Komsomolskaya Pravda the presence of his men had been "senseless."

Colonel-Ministry troops, told the daily Komsomolskaya Pravda the presence of his men had been "senseless."

"It will be a long war," he said. Russia took over the Soviet Interior Ministry and all its forces last week and merged them with parts of the former KGB into a

Russian security super-ministry. But this arrangement ran into opposition from the Russian parliament.

Tbilisi, capital of the third transcaucasian republic, Georgia experienced the heaviest night of fighting since rebel and loyalist forces clashed Sunday.

Rebel national guardsmen seized the headquarters of the KGB security police overnight and set it on fire. They freed eight jailed politicians, including Georgy Chanturia, most prominent opponent of besieged President Zviad Gamsakhurdia.

At least 42 people have been killed in six days as the rebels attacked Mr. Gamsakhurdia's barricaded headquarters in the Georgian parliament with artillery, rockets and machineguns.

The defence ministers of the 11 member-states met in Moscow Thursday, before Mr. Shaposhnikov, a Russian, travelled to Kiev with his deputies. Ukrainian Defence Minister Konstantin Morozov was also at the Kiev talks.

Mr. Morozov's deputy Ivan Bizhan told reporters the talks would continue at Monday's summit. He said Mr. Shaposhnikov had shown understanding for Ukraine's wish to form its own armed forces.

Interfax News Agency said Russia and Ukraine clashed on Wednesday over who should control the large Black Sea Fleet.

Mr. Bizhan denied Ukraine was seeking to take over the fleet's vessels armed with nuclear missiles.

"The question of the Black Sea Fleet will be discussed in Minsk," he said. "But that does not necessarily mean it will be settled on Dec. 30."

Less than 24 hours after being



Leonid Kravchuk

forced to resign as president of a disbanded Soviet Union, Mr. Gorbachev was back before the media Thursday, in his old ebullient style.

He strode confidently into a farewell reception given by his staff, joked with aides and journalists, drank toasts in lemon vodka and signed autographs by the dozen.

He looked healthy, despite the traumatic weeks since the launching of the Commonwealth of Independent States spelled the end of his six and three-quarter year rule.

He seemed more like a Western presidential candidate than a beaten politician, who might at 60 have been heading for a quiet retirement in his country dacha.

Retirement seemed the last thing on Mr. Gorbachev's mind. "I have big plans. My role is changing but I am not leaving the political scene," he said in a brief speech.

"For the next two weeks I'm going to disappear. Not physically... I just need to recover. I think it is logical to mark a break between the end and the (new) beginning."

Mr. Gorbachev has pledged to do all he can, at home and abroad, to support Russian President Boris Yeltsin as long as his onetime protégé-turned-rival pursues democratic reforms.

All survive 'miracle' Swedish jet crash

STOCKHOLM (Agencies) — All 129 passengers and crew survived when a Scandinavian Airlines plane broke up making an emergency belly landing just minutes after takeoff from Stockholm's Arlanda Airport Friday, officials said.

"It's a miracle that everybody survived," said air traffic control spokesman Claes Wesslau. "I was completely convinced all would die when I saw the plane coming down on my radar screen."

He said the pilot had reported both engines on his MD-80 airliner, a higher capacity version of the DC-9, had failed soon after it left the airport bound for Copenhagen.

Air rescue coordinator Hakan Lexing said 14 people had been injured, some of them seriously, when the aircraft made a belly landing in an area of forests and fields 40 kilometres north east of Stockholm.

"According to the reports from the scene there were no deaths," he told Reuters.

The plane broke into three pieces on impact and apparently landed alongside a field, Mr. Wesslau said.

The aircraft had been scheduled to fly on to Warsaw from Copenhagen.

Mr. Wesslau said the pilot reported problems with both of the plane's engines a few minutes after takeoff at 8.45 a.m. (0745 GMT).

The aircraft had reached an altitude of about 2,000 feet (600 metres) when both engines failed, he said.

"He tried to restart both engines but apparently did not succeed," Mr. Wesslau told Reuters.

Air rescue officials said helicopters were taking the injured to nearby hospitals.

Passengers walked through light snow and icy slush to a small, red house about 200 metres from the crash site. They were then wrapped in blankets and their names checked off a list as they boarded buses.

The pilot said soon after takeoff he was having trouble with both engines, the National News Agency TT reported.

Croats report fierce attack on Karlovac

ZAGREB (R) — A key Croatian town was bombed overnight with the heaviest shelling in six months of war, Croatian radio reported Friday.

The radio said some 500 mortar bombs hit all parts of Karlovac, driving people into shelters and leaving some parts of the town without water or electricity.

"It was the worst attack on Karlovac since the start of the war," the report said.

Karlovac, a baroque industrial town about 55 kilometres south west of Zagreb, is at the western end of an area claimed by Serb extremists.

"Many blocks of apartments and important buildings in the town were hit," the radio said, adding that Recica and other nearby villages were also hit.

There were no immediate reports of casualties.

The radio also reported shelling on Osijek, at the other end of Croatia near its eastern border with Serbia.

One person was killed and two injured, a duty officer at the Osijek Police Station told Reuters by telephone.

"It was like every night," the officer said. "Shells were falling everywhere. It looked random — the Serbs don't aim, they just

shoot."

There was no communique from the federal army, which is fighting alongside the republic's Serb minority against the Croats.

On Thursday night the army rejected previous accounts of shelling on Osijek, saying the radio reports were part of a campaign by the Croatian leadership to blame the army for ceasefire violations.

A Reuters reporter visiting Osijek Wednesday heard heavy shelling on the town, where much of the population is living in underground shelters, and saw damage caused by previous attacks.

Both sides say they want a ceasefire and the installation of a United Nations peacekeeping force, but the U.N. will send troops only after a reliable ceasefire has been established.

U.N. special envoy Cyrus Vance is expected to return to Yugoslavia Monday. Speaking at U.N. headquarters Thursday he expressed little optimism that a force would be sent soon.

Meanwhile, Yugoslav republics and political parties hoping to preserve the Balkan federation are being summoned to attend a congress in Belgrade on Jan. 3 to form a new Yugoslavia.

Cambodia restricts protests before Khmer Rouge return

PHNOM PENH (R) — The Phnom Penh government, alarmed by last weekend's bloody street protests, passed tough laws restricting demonstrations Friday — two days before the expected return of hated Khmer Rouge guerrilla leaders.

The laws were approved by a special session of the Cambodian National Assembly called in response to the protests in which at least three people died and 26 were injured.

Government permission will now be needed for any demonstration. Prime Minister Hun Sen told reporters the curbs were necessary because official investigations into last Saturday's violence pointed to "armed elements."

"We are now investigating who were the people behind it," he said. "We've captured almost 10 guns. We have released all the medical students."

The arrest early last Saturday of four medical students sparked unprecedented mass protests that turned into running battles with police in the evening.

An elite army unit was deployed in Phnom Penh to help to restore order and the government announced a night curfew. All the capital's schools and universities were closed.

"We tried to follow human rights. We don't bar demonstrations but we don't permit them if they have weapons," Mr. Hun Sen said.

Indian troops impose curfew near site of train massacre

LUDHIANA, India (R) — Hundreds of Indian soldiers hunted Friday for Sikh militants who massacred 53 train passengers in the northern state of Punjab but a senior policeman said the killers appeared to have already fled.

The army was drafted in after militants stopped the train Thursday evening and systematically slaughtered Hindu passengers. Soldiers ordered residents to stay indoors as they combed wheat fields around the town of Jagraon and 20 nearby villages.

"The entire area is being combed," said S.S. Channy, magistrate in the Punjab city of Ludhiana. He said at least 800 army soldiers and an equal number of police and paramilitary troops were involved in the search.

Shiv Kumar Sharma, a deputy police superintendent, said the

killers had escaped before the army search began. He said 20 people caught out of doors were taken in for questioning but they did not appear to be involved in the massacre.

Channy told Reuters that Sikhs brandishing AK-47 rifles boarded the train at a level crossing near Jagraon, 35 kilometres southwest of Ludhiana, after four colleagues pulled the emergency cord to bring it to a halt.

The militants went through the train picking out Hindus and shooting them.

"They chose their targets deliberately and shot them, killing 49," Channy said. Four more died in a Ludhiana hospital Friday.

All but two of the victims were Hindus. Channy said the two Sikhs killed were believed to have got in the way of bullets meant

for Hindu passengers.

Channy said 16 injured passengers were in hospital and at least one was critically hurt.

Railway employees went on strike in Ludhiana and nearby areas Friday to protest against the failure to find the killers immediately. Five colleagues were among the dead.

No train was allowed to enter Ludhiana Railway Station, an important commercial hub in Punjab.

Sikhs fighting in Punjab for an independent homeland they call Khalistan, or land of the pure, have often targeted Hindus in an increasingly bloody decade-old campaign.

Police have reported more than 5,500 deaths in the campaign this year compared with 3,800 in 1990, a toll double the previous year's. The great majority of the dead were Sikhs.

Bangladesh puts navy and air force on alert against Burma

CHITTAGONG, Bangladesh (R) — Bangladesh put its navy and air force on alert Friday and evacuated border villages in response to security reports that Burma was beefing up a military build-up along the troubled frontier.

"The navy has been asked to intensify patrol in the Bay of Bengal while the air force has also been put on alert," an official in the southern port city of Chittagong said.

The action came after Rangoon failed to respond to Dhaka's request for a meeting to defuse border tensions and instead strengthened its forces along the 270 kilometres frontier, he said.

Bangladesh Armed Forces were put on high alert Tuesday following intelligence reports that Burma had mobilised up to 25,000 regular troops along the border and was digging bunkers and trenches.

Bangladesh Rifles border guards increased patrols, deployed more soldiers to man camps and were building a network of trenches and bunkers, intelligence officials said.

The troop build-up began after a Burmese frontier force attacked Bangladesh. Rifle guards at Re-

zupara last Saturday, killing one soldier and wounding three.

A Rezupara resident died when a bomb, believed planted by the Burmese, exploded hours later. Five villagers were injured.

The Foreign Ministry called Burmese Ambassador Soe Myint in Thursday and offered him a helicopter to visit Rezupara to verify the incident, an official said. The ambassador had yet to respond.

Bangladesh Foreign Minister Mustafizur Rahman told the ambassador Sunday that the attack violated a 1978 border agreement and demanded urgent steps to end the troop build-up.

"Bangladesh does not remain indifferent to the recent incidents and a continuing exodus of Burmese Muslims into this country," a Foreign Office spokesman told the Bangladesh News Agency (BSS) late Thursday.

Relations between Dhaka and Rangoon deteriorated this year when thousands of Burmese Muslims, known as Rohingyas, fled to south east Bangladesh to escape alleged persecution by the Burmese army.

Burma apparently believes Burmese refugees in Bangladesh are backing Muslim rebels, mem-

bers of the Rohingya Solidarity Organisation (RSO), fighting for an independent homeland in Burma's western Arakan state.

Intelligence sources in Chittagong said RSO guerrillas had killed 15 Burmese soldiers and wounded 10 in a surprise attack near Maungdaw town in Arakan Thursday.

"Several other soldiers were killed in RSO factions earlier this month," one source said Friday. Border officials said at least 25,000 Bangladeshi villagers in Ukha, Naikhyangchhari and Teknaf areas had left their homes after last Saturday's gunbattle.

Burmese soldiers Thursday imposed a curfew in Maungdaw and nearby Butthidong and Bangladesh authorities asked residents within 11 kilometres to move to safer places.

"It looks as though they (Burmese) are preparing for more offensives and so our villagers must remain in safer places," an Ukha official told visiting reporters.

Maungdaw and Butthidong face famine after local authorities restricted movement of people and materials, Bangladesh State Radio said Friday.

Leaders laud Gorbachev, recognise successors

LONDON (R) — World leaders have paid tribute to former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev as a man who changed the course of history but wasted no time in recognising his successors.

Mr. Gorbachev, who resigned as Soviet president Wednesday after nearly seven years in power, was praised almost unanimously for ending the cold war and returning freedom and democracy to East Europe.

"His legacy guarantees him an honoured place in history..." U.S. President George Bush said in a Christmas address.

His predecessor Ronald Reagan, who once called the Soviet Union an "evil empire" said: "Mikhail Gorbachev will live forever in history."

But Mr. Bush moved quickly to grant diplomatic recognition to Russia, the dominant force in a new commonwealth of independent states replacing the defunct Soviet Union, and said he was ready to work with the republic's President Boris Yeltsin.

Washington's speedy recognition of Russia was echoed by a number of countries including the 12-member European Community, India, Australia and Canada.

Worldwide, political leaders and media outlined the magnitude of Mr. Gorbachev's achievements.

"This is not just one more turn of the Kremlin wheel or one more instance in which a politician hung on too long..." the Washington Post said. "It is the eclipse of someone who not only reinvented his country but in a sense the world."

British Prime Minister John Major praised Mr. Gorbachev as a historic reformer. "It is given to very few people to change the course of history," he said. "But that is what Gorbachev has done. Whatever happens today his place in history is secure."

Iran's leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei commented that "the collapse of the so-called Socialist empire is proof of the unrighteousness of systems based on force and material wealth."

But for most of the world, feelings towards the former Soviet leader were summed up by the influential Portuguese daily Publico, which called him "the man who unfroze history" and said simply: "Thank you, Gorbachev."

The Dutch government, currently holding the EC rotating presidency, said in a statement on behalf of all 12 EC members: "His daring policies... made possible a radical and irrevocable break with his country's Communist past."

Countries varied in the extent to which they were ready to recognise former Soviet republics other than Russia.

Bush said Washington would

move quickly to establish diplomatic ties with five of the other former republics and would go likewise with the remaining six when they committed themselves to "responsible security policies and democratic principles."

The EC, which had sought written acceptance of EC-drafted guidelines from other republics before offering them recognition, said it would recognise the former Soviet republics of Ukraine and Armenia.

It expected to receive replies from other republics soon, a statement issued by the EC's Dutch presidency said.

Poland announced it had officially recognised all the former 11 Soviet republics comprising the new Commonwealth of Independent States.

Japan extended official diplomatic recognition Friday to the Russian Republic as the successor to the Soviet Union and renewed calls for the return of islands captured by the Soviet army at the end of World War II.

Government spokesman Koichi Kato made the announcement after the cabinet met Friday morning and approved establishing diplomatic relations with Russia.

Japan may recognise the other 10 former Soviet republics that have joined Russia in a new commonwealth of independent states by year's end, officials said. Like the United States and other Western countries, Japan has put off recognising Georgia, which has been scarred by unrest.

China Friday recognised Russia and the other republics, the national radio reported.

The Cuban government announced Thursday it had extended official diplomatic recognition to the former Soviet republics that make up the new commonwealth.

The announcement by the Foreign Ministry also said that Havana had extended recognition to Georgia.

The announcement, published in the official Granma newspaper, said Havana took the step "in accord with its traditional and basic foreign policy principles with respect to the right to self-determination of peoples."

One of the new states, Ukraine, had been already recognised by Cuba on Dec. 1, the announcement said.

North Korea has recognised the republics comprising the commonwealth as successors to Pyongyang's former major ally, the Soviet Union, the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) reported Friday.

North Korean Foreign Minister Kim Yong-Nam extended this recognition in letters to the foreign ministers of the countries of the commonwealth, said KCNA, monitored in Tokyo.

Manila: U.S. has one year to quit last base

MANILA (R) — The Philippines, signalling the end to nearly a century of American servicemen on its soil, said Friday U.S. forces must leave within one year after talks on a three-year phased withdrawal collapsed.

President Corason Aquino's government will next week serve Washington with formal notice to vacate its last installation of Subic Naval Base by Dec. 31, 1992, Mrs. Aquino's Executive Secretary Franklin Drilon said.

Mr. Drilon told a news conference the United States, the former colonial ruler, had agreed to the decision.

While the Aquino government's decision is final, Washington could negotiate a new treaty with the government that will succeed Mrs. Aquino after presidential elections in May next year," Mr. Drilon said.

Most of nearly a dozen politicians seeking to succeed Mrs. Aquino favour a continued U.S. military presence. But an American official said Washington had no plans to negotiate a new treaty with the next government.

"There are no plans to all to renegotiate. The timing (of the withdrawal) is not set but the pace will preclude any walking back," said the official, who asked not to be named.

The official said some activities at Subic would be dispersed to other South East Asian countries "at a reduced level" while other activities would cease.

The United States established Subic as a naval station in 1901, three years after it drove out Spanish colonial forces and occupied the islands.

Subic, 80 kilometres northwest of Manila, is a repair yard for the Seventh Fleet and a training centre. It has a big ammunition and supply depot that helps the United States patrol vital trade

routes between the Middle East and East Asia.

The base employs about 14,000 Filipino workers and pumps millions of dollars annually into the economy of surrounding cities and towns.

Earlier this year, Washington handed over four smaller facilities to Manila and abandoned the giant Clark Air Base after it was wrecked by the eruption of Mount Pinatubo volcano in June.

About 6,000 American servicemen are still at Subic.

"Today, the governments of the Philippines and the United States have mutually agreed to terminate discussion on a proposed three-day executive agreement for a phased and orderly withdrawal of U.S. forces stationed at the Subic Naval Base," Mr. Drilon said.

"The Philippines... will formally serve upon the United States government a one-year notice of termination of the... military bases agreement on Dec. 31, 1991," he said.

"The withdrawal of the U.S. forces from the Subic Naval Base will be completed by Dec. 31, 1992."

Mr. Drilon said disputes over five issues led to a decision by both sides to end the talks after a final meeting Friday between Mrs. Aquino and Ambassador Frank Wisner.

He said they included Manila's demand for a timetable of force withdrawals and Washington's insistence on keeping its policy of neither confirming nor denying the presence of nuclear weapons on its military bases.

U.S. officials said they could not give a timetable because that would limit their military options and Manila's demand for a statement that American ships coming into Subic carry no nuclear weapons was unacceptable.

Australia reshuffles cabinet to fight recession

CANBERRA (R) — Prime Minister Paul Keating Friday appointed Australia's fourth treasurer in seven months in a cabinet reshuffle aimed at pulling the nation out of recession and rewarding ministers who supported his push for power.

John Dawkins, a radical and aggressive decision-maker, was named treasurer, the most senior economic post, partly for his help last week to Mr. Keating in ousting Bob Hawke as Labour government leader.

Mr. Dawkins told reporters his prime objective would be to cut Australia's unemployment rate.

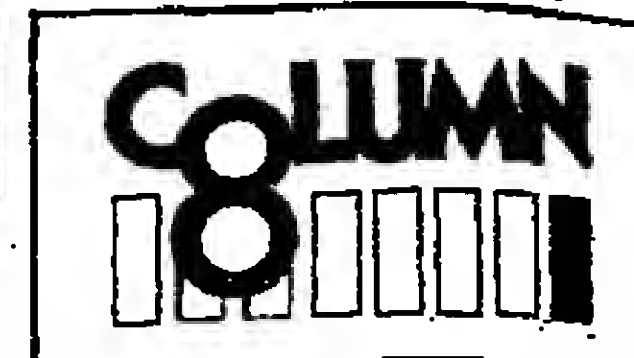
"My task now is to try to find as many jobs as possible for the unemployed. I will dedicate

myself single-mindedly to that particular objective," he said.

Mr. Hawke ally Ralph Willis, who spent just 19 days as treasurer, returns to his old portfolio as finance minister, a supportive economic role covering budgetary administration.

"It was a difficult decision for me to make," Mr. Keating, who ousted Mr. Hawke on Dec. 19, told reporters in announcing a reshuffle affecting 11 ministries.

"I have found Dawkins to be a most careful, creative and competent person assessing issues," said Mr. Keating, who beat Mr. Hawke by 56 votes to 51 in a leadership poll among Labour politicians.



Sheena Easton takes up acting

SANTA ANA, California (AP) — Sheena Easton is studying acting the hard way by taking the role of Aldonza in a revival of Man Of La Mancha touring the United States before it hits Broadway. On the way, she's taking knocks from critics. "I think some people here would like to see me hung, drawn and quartered," the 32-year-old Scottish pop singer said of drama critics who question her acting gifts. "Their attitude seems to be, 'how dare you' they resent me for even trying," she said. Miss Easton stars opposite Raul Julia in the musical. It's been to Chicago and Los Angeles and arrives this week in Costa Mesa, California. Miss Easton tried her hand at acting briefly in 1988, playing Don Johnson's singer wife in the hit NBC television show Miami Vice. La Mancha is her first serious acting foray.

Porno video queen applies for job as police chief

LAKE ST. LOUIS (AP) — Pornographic movie experience doesn't exactly look good on an application for police chief, but it's not stopping Suzi Wahl. If there's a contradiction, she doesn't see it. "Just because a woman is beautiful and allows you to look at that beauty, does not mean that she's not qualified to do millions of other jobs that require brains," Ms. Wahl said. "Law enforcement is my background," she said. "I enjoy it." City administrator Ron Nelson will choose the new police chief early next year. He said all applications will be considered seriously — even Ms. Wahl's. Police raided her sex-video business this fall in Lake St. Louis, a town of 7,500 near St. Louis, but did more damage to themselves: Four deputies ended up resigning, and Police Chief John Selby lost his job. Ms. Wahl, 39, stands out among 50 or so people hoping to replace him. But not because she was the director of public safety in a small Illinois town for 18 months and has a college degree in criminal justice. It's because her story was picked up by a national television show that referred to her as "sexy Suzi." And it's because of the mail-order video business she and her husband, Tom Wahl, 36, have run out of their home since 1987. If Ms. Wahl becomes police chief, she said she would have more pressing matters to pursue, like real crime and real criminals.

Ape thinks he is human, refuses mate

TOKYO (R) — A five-year old male orangutan brought up by zoo attendants apparently thinks he